



Fiery Kavanaugh denies quiet accuser Ford in Senate showdown

By LISA MASCARO and ALAN FRAM

WASHINGTON (AP) — In an extraordinary and highly emotional day of Senate testimony, California psychology professor Christine Blasey Ford quietly recounted her "100 percent" certainty Thursday that Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh had sexually assaulted her when they were teenagers. He angrily declared he was "100 percent certain" he did no such thing.

They both said the event and the public controversy that has erupted 36 years later had altered their lives forever and for the worse — perhaps the only thing they agreed on during a long day of testimony that was a study in contrasts of tone as well as substance. The hearing was a stunning public airing of a partisan fight — charged with explosive gender politics. The future of a high court, and potentially control of Congress, hangs the balance. Senators were left to decide whether the long day tipped their confirmation votes for or against Presi-



KAVANAUGH=TY

Judge Brett Kavanaugh is sworn in to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

dent Donald Trump's nominee.

Coming forward publicly

for the first time, Ford quietly told the nation and the Senate Judiciary Commit-

tee her long-held secret of the alleged assault in a locked room at a gather-

ing of friends when she was just 15.

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Trump health chief: Premiums to drop for popular ACA plan

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Premiums for a popular type of "silver" health plan under the Affordable Care Act will edge downward next year in most states, the Trump administration's health chief announced Thursday.

Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said premiums for a so-called "benchmark" silver plan will drop by 2 percent in the 39 states served by the federal HealthCare.gov website.

The number of marketplace insurers will grow for the first time since 2015, he added.

Azar's numbers were in line with a broader independent analysis earlier this month by Avalere Health and The Associated Press, which found premiums and markets stabilizing nationwide. But his claim that the Trump administration deserves credit for "Obamacare's" turnabout was quickly challenged.

"The president who was supposedly trying to sabo-



In this Sept. 12, 2018, file photo, Health & Human Services Secretary Alex Azar speaks during an interview with The Associated Press in New York.

Associated Press

tage the Affordable Care Act has proven better at managing it than the president who wrote the law," Azar bragged in his speech to a health policy group in Nashville. Azar cited regulatory actions to improve the inner workings of the ACA marketplaces and increase consumer choice

among insurance plans that don't comply with health law rules.

The earlier AP analysis had found that average premiums across all types of plans under the Obama health law will rise 3.3 percent, with 12 states seeing declines. That study crunched data from 47 states and Washington, D.C., with publicly available information on proposed and final rates for 2019.

Reacting to Azar's claims, Larry Levitt of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation said it's likely that premiums for 2019 would have gone down even more but for other administration actions last year that roiled the markets.

Those included President Donald Trump's abrupt cancellation of a major stream of payments to insurers —

which triggered sharp 2018 premium increases. Also, Trump and congressional Republicans spent much of last year in a fruitless quest to repeal "Obamacare," with the president repeatedly pronouncing it "dead." "The premium stability on tap for 2019 is primarily because insurers overshot with their premium increases for this year, reacting to an environment of tremendous uncertainty," Levitt said.

Under the design of the ACA, premium increases automatically boost taxpayer-provided subsidies to consumers. Big premium increases last year allowed many insurers to return to profitability as subsidies flowed from federal coffers. The average total premium for an individual covered under the health law is now close to \$600 a month.

In previous election years, health law premiums have provided plenty of material for Republican attack ads. That issue has been taken away this year by market stability. Instead the debate has shifted to Democratic charges that the Trump administration and Republicans want to undermine the ACA's protections for people with pre-existing health conditions.

Azar's speech also took aim at the "Medicare for All" national health plan sought by Sen. Bernie Sanders, saying it would undermine access for seniors and pile huge costs on taxpayers.

The Trump administration is stepping up its criticism of the Vermont senator's plan as many Democratic candidates in the midterm elections voice support for his vision of a government-run health care system.

"The main thrust of 'Medicare for All' is giving you a new government plan and taking away your other choices," Azar said.

As proposed, the Sanders plan would cover all Americans.

Taxes on individuals and employers would replace premiums, deductibles and copays, and the government would set payment rates for hospitals and doctors.

Sanders says his approach would uphold quality and gradually bring costs under control, but studies show it would translate to a historic expansion of the federal government's role in health care. Critics doubt promised savings could be delivered. □

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House judiciary panel subpoenas memos kept by McCabe at FBI

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican-led House Judiciary Committee on Thursday subpoenaed the Justice Department for memos written by former FBI acting director Andrew McCabe. The committee is also demanding documents related to the FBI's application to monitor the

communications of former Trump campaign aide Carter Page. And the subpoena came the same day the co-founder of an opposition research firm that hired a former British spy to investigate President Donald Trump's potential Russia ties declined a private interview for an investiga-

tion the committee is jointly carrying out with the House Government Oversight and Reform Committee.

The memos have taken on new relevance following news reports that Rosenstein discussed secretly recording Trump and invoking the 25th Amendment to remove the president. □

SENATE SHOWDOWN

Continued from Front

The memory — and Kavanaugh's laughter during the act — was "locked" in her brain, she said: "100 percent." Hours later, Kavanaugh angrily denied it, alternating a loud, defiant tone with near tears as he addressed the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"You have replaced 'advice and consent' with 'search and destroy,'" he said, referring to the Constitution's charge to senators' duties in confirming high officials.

What happens next may hinge on what Trump and his Republican allies think about the display in what could become a defining moment for a party that has struggled to retain female voters. The GOP-controlled committee was scheduled to vote Friday morning on whether to push ahead with the conservative judge's nomination.

Repeatedly Democrats asked Kavanaugh to call for an FBI investigation into the claims. He did not.

"I welcome whatever the committee wants to do," he said.

Republicans are reluctant for several reasons, including the likelihood that further investigations could push a vote past the November elections that may switch Senate control back to the Democrats and make consideration of any Trump nominee more difficult.

Across more than 10 hours, the senators heard from only the two witnesses. Ford delivered her testimony with steady, deliberate certitude. She admitted gaps in her memory as she choked back tears and said she "believed he was going to rape me." Kavanaugh's entered the hearing room fuming and ready to fight, as he angrily denied the charges from Ford and other woman accusing him of misconduct, barked back at senators and dismissed some questions with a flippant "whatever."

"You may defeat me in the final vote, but you'll never get me to quit, never," he said.

Trump nominated the con-

servative jurist in what was supposed to be an election year capstone to the GOP agenda, locking in the court's majority for years to come. Instead the nomination that Republicans were rushing for a vote now hangs precariously after one of the most emotionally charged hearings Capitol Hill has ever seen. Coming amid a national reckoning over sexual misconduct at the top of powerful institutions, it exposed continued divisions over justice, fairness and who should be believed. And coming weeks before elections, it ensured that debate would play into the fight for control of Congress.

The day opened with Ford, now a 51-year-old college professor in California, raising her right hand to swear under oath about the allegations she said she never expected to share publicly until they leaked in the media two weeks ago and reporters started staking out her home and work in California.

Wearing a blue suit as Anita Hill did more two decades ago when she testified about sexual misconduct by Clarence Thomas, the mom of two testified before a committee that with only male senators on the Republican side of the dais. The psychology professor described what she says was a harrowing assault in the summer of 1982: How an inebriated Kavanaugh and another teen, Mark Judge, locked her in a room at a house party as Kavanaugh was grinding and groping her. She said he put his hand over her mouth to muffle her screams.

"I believed he was going to rape me," she testified. When the committee's top Democrat, Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, asked how she could be sure that Kavanaugh was the attacker, Ford said, "The same way I'm sure I'm talking to you right now." Later, she told Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., that her certainty was "100 percent."

Asked by Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., for her strongest memory of the alleged incident, Ford, said it was the two boys' laughter.

"Indelible in the hippocampus is the laughter," said



Ford, who is a research psychologist, "the uproarious Republican strategists were privately hand-wringing after Ford's testimony. The GOP special counsel Rachel Mitchell, a Phoenix sex crimes prosecutor, who

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White House postpones meeting between Trump, Rosenstein



Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein leaves his home on Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018 in Bethesda, Md.

Associated Press

By ERIC TUCKER
WASHINGTON (AP) — A highly anticipated meeting between President Donald Trump and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein was postponed until next week to avoid conflicting with a dramatic Senate hearing involving Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, the White House said Thursday.
 The two were set to meet Thursday following news media reports that Rosenstein last year discussed possibly secretly recording the president and using the Constitution's 25th Amendment to remove him from office.

But White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the men agreed to reschedule their meeting because "they do not want to do anything to interfere with the hearing." Amid speculation that the meeting could result in Rosenstein's dismissal or resignation, Trump said Wednesday that he would "certainly prefer not" to fire Rosenstein and that the Justice Department's No. 2 official had denied making the remarks first attributed to him in a New York Times report.
 "I would much prefer keeping Rod Rosenstein," Trump said at a news conference in New York. "He said he did not say it. He said he does not believe that. He said he has a lot of respect for me, and he was very nice and we'll see."
 Trump added, "My preference would be to keep him and to let him finish up." White House counselor Kellyanne Conway would not say Thursday when the meeting would take place, but stressed that the two will talk and Trump has made clear "he would prefer that the deputy attorney general stay on the job and complete the job." Rosenstein is overseeing special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election, and his dismissal would put that probe in jeopardy and create a political storm.
 The meeting delay prolongs the uncertainty of Rosenstein's status. Rosenstein headed to the White House on Monday morning preparing to be fired and had discussed a possible resignation over the weekend with White House officials. But after meeting with chief of staff John Kelly and speaking by phone with Trump, he got a reprieve with the Trump meeting scheduled for Thursday.
 Since then, the White House has sought to tamp down anxiety that Rosenstein would be fired. White House officials called senators Monday to say Trump had said he wouldn't be firing Rosenstein at the

meeting, according to two people familiar with the conversations who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private discussions. Aides have advised Trump against taking any extreme actions ahead of the midterm elections with his party's majorities in Congress already under threat. Friends and former colleagues of Rosenstein say they don't expect him to step aside and give up oversight of the Russia investigation and the enormous swath of Justice Department operations for which he is responsible.
 Rosenstein, who has spent his entire career in government, "has tremendous loyalty to the department," said former Justice Department lawyer and longtime friend James Trusty.
 "He's a very long-run, historical-minded guy in a lot of ways," Trusty said. "I think he may have some confidence that history will be kinder to him than politicians are." Trump's remarks Wednesday followed a chaotic period that began last Friday with reports that Rosenstein had last year discussed possibly secretly recording the president and invoking the Constitution to remove Trump from office. The Justice Department issued statements aimed at denying the reports, including one that said the wiretap remark was meant sarcastically.
 Rosenstein appointed Mueller in May 2017, oversees his work and has repeatedly defended the breadth and scope of the probe. Trump has been critical of Rosenstein's oversight of the probe, but the two have at times displayed a warm working relationship, and Rosenstein has been spared some of the more personal and antagonistic broadsides leveled against Attorney General Jeff Sessions.
 Though Rosenstein appears poised to survive the week, it's not clear how much longer he'll be around. Trump has signaled that he may fire Sessions after the November midterms, and Rosenstein could go with him. □

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Jury: Jehovah's Witnesses must pay \$35M to abuse survivor

By MATT VOLZ

Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — The Jehovah's Witnesses must pay \$35 million to a woman who says the church's national organization ordered Montana clergy members not to report her sexual abuse as a child at the hands of a congregation member, a jury ruled in a verdict.

A judge must review the penalty, and the Jehovah's Witnesses' national organization — Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York — plans to appeal.

Still, the 21-year-old woman's attorneys say Wednesday's verdict sends a message to the church to report child abuse to outside authorities.

"Hopefully that message is loud enough that this will cause the organization to change its priorities in a way that they will begin prioritizing the safety of children so that other children aren't abused in the future," attorney Neil Smith said Thursday. The Office of Public Information at the World Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses responded to the verdict with an unsigned statement.

"Jehovah's Witnesses abhor child abuse and strive to protect children from such acts. Watchtower is pursuing appellate review," it said.

The Montana case is one of dozens that have been filed nationwide over the past decade alleging Jehovah's Witnesses mismanaged or covered up the sexual abuse of children.

The case that prompted Wednesday's ruling involved two women, now 32 and 21, who allege a family member sexually abused them and a third family member in Thompson Falls in the 1990s and 2000s.

The women say they reported the abuse to church elders, who handled the matter internally after consulting with the national organization.

The elders expelled the abuser from the congregation in 2004 then reinstated him the next year, the lawsuit states, and the abuse of the girl who is now 21 continued.

The lawsuit claimed the local and national Jehovah's Witnesses organizations were negligent and violated a Montana law that requires them to report abuse to outside authorities.

"Their national headquarters, called Watchtower, they control when and if anyone within their organization reports child abuse," Smith said. "Watchtower instructed everyone involved that they were not to report the matter to authorities."

Attorneys for the Jehovah's Witnesses said in court filings that Montana law exempts elders from reporting "internal ecclesiastical proceedings on a congregation member's serious sin."

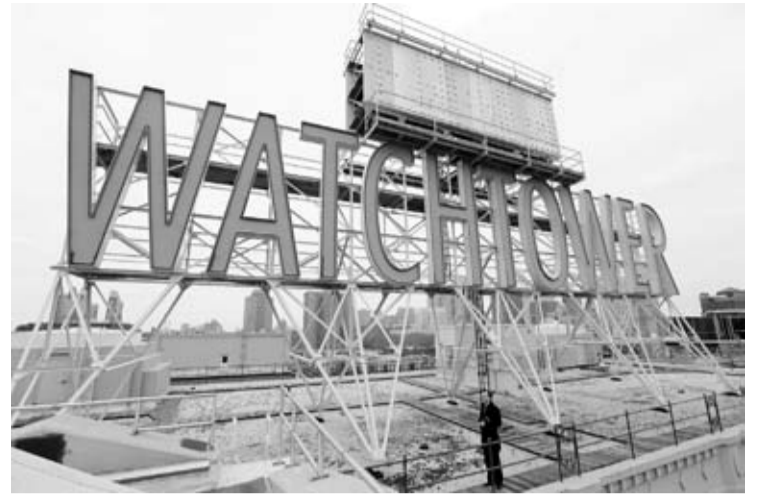
The church also contended that the national organization isn't liable for the actions by Thompson Falls elders, and that too much time has passed for the women to sue.

The jury awarded the 21-year-old woman \$4 mil-

lion for her injuries, plus \$30 million in punitive damages against Watchtower and \$1 million in punitive damages against the Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, another Jehovah's Witness corporation that communicates with congregations across the U.S.

The monetary award must be reviewed by the trial judge and could be reduced. A Montana law caps punitive damage awards at 3 percent of a company's net worth or \$10 million, whichever is less. A legal challenge to that law is pending before the Montana Supreme Court.

The jury dismissed claims



In this Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2015, file photo, the iconic Watchtower sign is seen on the roof of 25-30 Columbia Heights, then world headquarters of the Jehovah's Witnesses, in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

Associated Press

that the church should have reported the second woman's abuse by the same congregation member. Jurors concluded church elders did not receive notice of the 32-year-old woman's abuse in 1998 as she said they did, and

therefore did not have a duty to tell authorities. The third family member who claimed abuse was not a plaintiff in the lawsuit. The Associated Press generally does not name people who say they are a victim of a sex crime. □



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Anita Hill says #MeToo movement can create lasting change

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST
SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Anita Hill said Wednesday her pivotal 1991 Senate testimony about sexual harassment by a Supreme Court nominee sparked a wave of awareness, but lasting change failed because of a lack of clear leadership and a reluctance to confront harsh realities.

On the eve of another hearing where a U.S. Supreme Court nominee is facing allegations of sexual misconduct, she told a packed University of Utah audience at a preplanned lecture that the #MeToo movement has the opportunity to create long-term solutions.

However, that is going to require facing questions the nation has been reluctant to address, including the prevalence of the problem and the fact that abusers don't always look like stereotypical monsters, she said.

"We look for simple solutions because we don't want to deal with the hard questions," she said. "When those simple solutions fail, too often we retreat."

On Thursday, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hear from nominee Brett Kavanaugh and the woman who accuses him of sexual assault, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford. She says she attempted to rape her when they were teens. Kavanaugh has denied the allegations.



Anita Hill speaks at the University of Utah Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018, in Salt Lake City. Associated Press

The hearing comes nearly 30 years after her testimony against Clarence Thomas, who was later confirmed to the Supreme Court. Hill said that when she came forward, she was thinking about the integrity of the court and the fact that justices have lifetime

appointments. "Access to equal justice for all is what was at stake in 1991, and it's what's at stake now," said Hill, now 62 and a professor at Brandeis University. She criticized the decision to set a hearing for the Kavanaugh allegations with-

out a thorough, neutral investigation and input from experts who can include context about things like delayed reporting of sexual assault, she said. "Setting them up this way does a disservice not only to the primary witness, but it does a disservice to the

courts, and it does a disservice to the American people who want to know how to respond to these situations and they want representation that helps them understand," she said.

Women who come forward with sexual misconduct allegations are often portrayed as "crazy, vindictive, promiscuous or prudes," reactions that explain why many don't come forward sooner, Hill said.

Some of the senators who questioned her remain on the Senate Judiciary Committee, including Republican Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch. She recalled how he read from a copy of the book "The Exorcist," suggesting a passage had inspired her to invent an allegation.

Hatch is again at the center of the process, supporting Kavanaugh and questioning why Democrats didn't bring forward allegations against him earlier. Hatch has also said the committee should hear from Ford, and "then we should vote." She challenged the enthusiastic Utah audience, who gave her a spontaneous standing ovation at the start of her speech, to think about what they might do next if they're disappointed with how things unfold in the coming days.

"Will you engage your own institutions in change? Will you engage politically?" she said. "I can tell you that I will continue to use my voice." □



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Police chief 'heartbroken' after body discovered in creek

GASTONIA, N.C. (AP) — The chief of a North Carolina police department said Thursday he was "heartbroken" over the discovery of a body believed to be that of a missing 6-year-old boy. Gastonia Police Chief Robert Helton fought back tears and a breaking voice during a news conference in which it was announced officials believed the body searchers found was that of Maddox Ritch.

"Our community's heartbroken. This is not the end that we hoped for," Helton said. "I've lost a lot of sleep this week worrying about Maddox."

Gastonia Fire Chief Phil Welch said the body was found in a creek, slightly more than a mile (1.6 kilometers) east of Rankin Lake Park, by a searcher who was walking down the middle of the creek as his partners stood on the bank. He said the area had been searched previously by drones, all-terrain vehicles and foot patrols.

Welch said a crew of 15 searchers returned to the creek and discovered the body.

"There is no sense of accomplishment here today,"

Welch said. "There is grieving down at our command post."

FBI agent Jason Kaplan, also fighting tears, said the investigation into what happened to Maddox will continue. He said the water wasn't more than 3 feet (0.9 meters) deep at the spot where the body was found, adding that it's too early to say whether foul play was involved. Neither he nor the other officials would provide additional details regarding the body being found, including how long the body had been in the creek.

Last Saturday, Maddox Ritch's father said the boy ran off from him and a friend at the park and disappeared before he could catch up to him.

The news release says the boy's parents have been notified about the body being found, and police scheduled a news conference for later in the afternoon.

Both parents went before the media this week to plead for any information that would lead to the discovery of Maddox, who was autistic. On Wednesday, Ian Ritch appeared



Gastonia Police Chief Robert Helton, left, listens as Ian Ritch speaks during a press conference Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018, in Gastonia, N.C., about his 6-year-old son Maddox Ritch who disappeared while they were visiting Rankin Lake Park near downtown Gastonia Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018.

on national television and at a news conference to repeat the pleas.

According to the boy's father, Ian Ritch, Maddox was about 25 feet to 30 feet (7 meters to 9 meters) away before he broke into a sprint just as a jogger passed them. The father said he is a diabetic and because he has neuropathy

in his feet, he has trouble running.

"He likes running," Ritch said. "I couldn't catch up with him. I feel guilt for letting him get so far ahead of me before I started running after him."

Ritch said the boy looked back at him and laughed, adding that he would slow down and then speed up

again. With the help of the friend, Ritch searched for his son but couldn't find him. Park personnel also joined in the search but didn't see Maddox, either. After an hour, Ritch called 911, saying he delayed that call because he thought he would find his son and there was no reason to call police. □

Denver removes homeless storage units lived in by people

DENVER (AP) — Denver officials have removed large outdoor storage containers set up last year for homeless people after discovering that people were living inside them.

The city paid \$30,000 for 10 4-by-6-foot (1-by-2-meter) containers meant to give homeless people a safe place to store clothing and other possessions.

But the city decided to do away with the containers for now because people

were staying in the unventilated units day and night, Chris Conner, director of the city's Denver Road Home homelessness agency, told The Denver Post.

Some units near the Denver Rescue Mission shelter and facilities run by other nonprofit groups serving the homeless were damaged and vandalized and there were unconfirmed reports of narcotics sales and allegations of prostitution inside the containers, Conner

said.

"There was a feeling that they had crossed a threshold and were making the area less stable and safe for people," Conner said.

Homeless advocate Ray Lyall said he was not surprised by people lived in the containers.

"If it's cold, it's wet, I'd have slept in those things, too," he said. "I can't blame them for that."

The city is talking to a nonprofit group about moving

the containers to another location that would likely be gated and only available to homeless people who are seeking jobs, Conner said.

Nonprofit groups and at least one business offer lockers for homeless people to use, some of them funded by the city. But they tend to be smaller and usually require people to check in with staffers before accessing them.

The restaurant Sexy Pizza

has four school-style lockers for homeless people outside its location near downtown Denver. Kayvan Khalatbari, a mayoral candidate who holds a stake in the business, said having the lockers in a residential area seems to have helped.

"You have more eyes on these around the day," he said. "We haven't had a single issue in almost a year that these have been installed." □

Turkey's Erdogan arrives in Germany on bridge-building visit

By GEIR MOULSON
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan arrived in Germany Thursday for a visit aimed at reducing tensions between the two NATO allies at a time when Turkey's economic troubles are causing growing concerns and Europe needs Ankara's support to keep down the flow of migrants.

The trip is Erdogan's first formal state visit to Germany, which is home to more than 3 million people with Turkish roots. But the increasingly authoritarian leader is viewed with suspicion across the political spectrum in Germany, which has had difficult relations with Ankara in recent years.

It escalated in the past year to the point where Erdogan called Germany's mainstream parties "enemies of Turkey" and accused German officials of acting like Nazis, prompting Chancellor Angela Merkel to condemn the Turkish president's words.

At the same time, the two



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, right, and his wife Emine, left, arrive at the airport Tegel for an official state visit in Germany at the capital Berlin, Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

countries recognize mutual strategic interests and the two leaders appeared prepared to bury the hatchet ahead of the trip, which runs until Saturday.

"Turkey is an important partner for us, and it is also an important partner for Europe," Merkel's spokes-

man, Steffen Seibert, said Wednesday.

"We have a fundamental interest ... in an economically and politically stable Turkey, and of course in a

Turkey in which democracy is practiced," Seibert added.

He said that talks with Erdogan will address both "common interests" and dif-

ficult issues.

In an opinion piece in Thursday's Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper, Erdogan said it was time to "set aside our differences of opinion and concentrate on our joint interests."

"Turkey's hope is to develop relations with Germany and other nations as equals on the basis of mutual respect," he wrote.

Merkel championed a 2016 agreement with Turkey designed to halt the flow of refugees and migrants into Europe, which has held up even as relations between Ankara and the European Union soured. And Berlin considers Turkey an important partner in trying to end the conflict in neighboring Syria.

But there has been a series of setbacks to bilateral ties. Among the irritants have been a 2016 German parliament resolution labeling the early-20th century killing of Armenians in Turkey as "genocide." □

Presiding judge withdraws from Radovan Karadzic appeal case



In this file photo dated Tuesday, April 24, 2018, Former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic arrives at a UN court for the second day of his appeal against his convictions on charges including genocide and crimes against humanity and his 40-year prison sentence in The Hague, Netherlands.

Associated Press

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The presiding judge in the appeal by Radovan Karadzic against his genocide and war crimes convictions removed himself from the case Thursday, following

a request by the former Bosnian Serb leader's lawyer.

The decision by American Judge Theodor Meron could delay a ruling in the appeal that had been expected before the end of the year at the Mechanism for International Criminal

Tribunals. The mechanism is a court set up to deal with appeals and other residual issues from now-closed temporary tribunals for the Balkan wars and Rwandan genocide.

Meron's decision follows a ruling removing him and two other judges from the appeal of Karadzic's former military chief, Gen. Ratko Mladic, for appearance of bias because they had previously convicted lower-ranking Bosnian Serb officers.

In his written decision, Meron stressed that, had he remained on the five-judge appeals bench, "I would continue to adjudicate the Karadzic Case with an impartial mind."

He also criticized the decision to remove him from Mladic's appeal, saying that it "clearly contradicts established jurisprudence and, in my view, harms the interests of the Mechanism." □

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Egypt arming Sinai tribesmen in fight against Islamic State

By BRIAN ROHAN
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — In a remote outpost in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Ibrahim Abu-Sefira watches a mountainous skyline of jagged rock, ears tuned to the twilight silence, listening for any signs a fragile peace may be disturbed.

An elder from the Bedouin Tayaha tribe, he has seen armies, both Egyptian and Israeli, pass through this vast desert. Now the area is the center of a yearslong, bloody conflict between the Egyptian military and a local affiliate of the Islamic State group.

In a switch from the past, the military has begun arming Bedouin tribesmen like Abu-Sefira and having them patrol in operations against the IS militants deep in the peninsula's interior, where their local knowledge gives them an advantage, Abu-Sefira and other Bedouin say.

"We have to do it, it's our duty to make the people feel safe from the terrorists who were killing us," Abu-Sefira told The Associated Press by telephone from a checkpoint he was manning along with a dozen other men from the area, near the Halal mountains where the IS affiliate has been known to stockpile weapons and equipment. The military has not publicly acknowledged arming and using the Bedouin as a fighting force, saying only that they cooperate and provide intelligence. In the past, security forces have been wary of giving weapons to the Bedouin, given



This photo posted on a file sharing website Jan. 11, 2017, by the Islamic State Group in Sinai, a militant organization, shows a deadly attack by militants on an Egyptian police checkpoint, in el-Arish, north Sinai, Egypt.

Associated Press

the long history of tensions with the tribesmen. The shift appears to be an attempt to bring the Sinai population more onto the government's side in the fight.

Egypt has struggled to defeat the insurgency, led by the IS affiliate known as the Sinai Province of the Islamic State. For years, the epicenter of the conflict has been in a triangle of towns and cities in the northeast corner of Sinai on the Mediterranean coast. The insurgency gained momentum after general-turned-President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi led the army's overthrow in 2013 of the elected but divisive Islamist president, Mohammed Morsi.

Thousands of security forces and civilians have been killed, and thousands more arrested in what critics describe as a heavy-handed security crackdown. Homes have been destroyed, and heavy restrictions imposed

on the movement of people and goods.

The war has largely taken place hidden from the public eye, with journalists, non-residents and outside observers barred from the area. The conflict has also been kept at a distance from tourist resorts at the southern end of the peninsula.

In February, the military launched a massive operation in Sinai that also extended to encompass parts of the Nile Delta and deserts along the country's western border with Libya. Since then, the pace of IS attacks in Sinai's main theater has slowed to a trickle. In the operation, the army has employed a force known as the Abdelsalam group, with several thousand Bedouin, deployed in central parts of Sinai. Their main role is to accompany troops on patrols and raids searching for weapons

caches, as well as manning checkpoints to control roads, tribesmen have told the AP.

Usually if fighting erupts, the Bedouin move back while security forces engage, but "some of us even stay and fight up front," says Abu-Sefira, who patrols several times a week with the army. The tribesmen estimate that around 100 Bedouin have been killed, whether in gunbattles or by roadside bombs. They said they operate under Egypt's Third Army and are regularly attached to its units, with 4x4s and armored vehicles.

The Bedouin role points to how the fight has expanded beyond the coastal towns deep into the desert landscape of the peninsula. The tribesmen spoke of operating in areas as far as 90 miles (150 kilometers) south of the coast.

"Central Sinai is now mostly cleared," said Saleh Ibn-

Rashid, also of the Tayaha tribe. He said the army offered his unit assault rifles, light machine guns, body armor and helmets. "They treat us like soldiers and give us everything we need," he said, adding that his men have uncovered explosives, fuel supplies, cars and other equipment in homes and caves.

Allison McManus, a research director at the U.S.-based Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, said the military benefits from the Bedouins' knowledge of the terrain and local intelligence.

But cooperation "should be part of a long-term strategy that includes plans for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration to avoid protracted armed conflict once the insurgency is defeated," she said.

Tribesmen were already providing scouts and intelligence to the military under a broader organization, the Sinai Tribes Union. There have also been local arrangements with armed Bedouin in key combat zones near the Gaza border.

The Abdelsalam group represents a more direct cooperation, arming the Bedouin — who do not serve in the military — in a militia-like arrangement over a larger area. The development recalls the Sahwa movement in Iraq, where U.S. forces armed Sunni tribesmen to fight al-Qaida after the outbreak of Iraq's sectarian fighting in 2006, although in the Egyptian case the weapons are likely lighter and fewer. □

India chief justice's new decision strikes down adultery law

By **ASHOK SHARMA**

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — The chief justice of India's Supreme Court has presided over a string of verdicts in recent weeks that grant more rights to women, gay couples and religious minorities, challenging deeply conservative Indian society as he prepares to retire from the bench next month.

In the latest decision Thursday, Chief Justice Dipak Misra and the rest of the five-member court struck down a 158-year-old law that treated adultery in certain cases as a criminal offense punishable by up to five years in prison.

The court called the law, which did not allow wives to prosecute adulterous husbands, unconstitutional and noted that a "husband is not the master of woman." Adultery can still be grounds for divorce in India, the verdict said, but a criminal penalty violated women's protection to equal rights under the law. The verdict was hailed by activists and left-of-center members of India's Parlia-



In this Sept. 6, 2018 file photo, gay rights activists celebrate after the country's top court struck down a colonial-era law that made homosexual acts punishable by up to 10 years in prison, in Mumbai, India.

Associated Press

ment. "Excellent decision," tweeted Sushmita Dev, a lawmaker and president of the opposition Congress party's women's wing. She said "a law that does not give women the right to sue her adulterer husband

... is unequal treatment and militates against her status as an individual." The rights group Amnesty International India said the decision was "a progressive judgment" and the old law was a "remnant of a time

when a woman was considered to be the property of her husband." The scrapped law allowed men to file charges against other men who had affairs with their wives. Women having affairs could not be

prosecuted, but they also couldn't file a complaint against cheating husbands.

Earlier this month, the Misra-led court also struck down a colonial-era law that made gay sex punishable by up to 10 years in prison. The 1861 law, a relic of Victorian England that hung on long after the end of British colonialism, was "a breach of the rights of privacy and dignity," the court ruled. It added that "history owes an apology to the members of this community and their families, for the delay in providing redressal for the ignominy and ostracism that they have suffered through the centuries."

On Thursday, the court also decided not to reconsider a 1994 decision that would have delayed proceedings in a case over the ownership of the site of a mosque that Hindu hard-liners demolished in 1992.

The court's recent pace of decisions speaks to another feature of Misra's tenure: expediting cases in a country where they routinely take decades to resolve. □

In Nigeria, voodoo festival shows strength of traditions

By **SAM OLUKOYA**

Associated Press

AJIDO, Nigeria (AP) — Excitement grew in the crowd as the Zangbeto Voodoo festival reached a climax, with scores of colorful palm-frond figures representing the traditional guardian of the night.

As men and women in white ceremonial clothing sang and danced to the sound of heavy drums, adherents doused a cone-shaped Zangbeto with kerosene. A ball of fire rose as it went up in flames.

Some Nigerians frustrated by crime and corruption have suggested that reviving such traditions could be a deterrent. The performance over the weekend helped to create "fear and reverence," the chairman of the festival's organizing committee, Sehude Adeyinka Amosu, told The Associated Press.



In this photo taken Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018, people attend the Ajido Voodoo festival in Nigeria.

Associated Press

Every religion has some hold on the people, he said.

"The people needed to see that the Zangbeto is not just a toy."

The festival of about 2,000 people in the coastal Ajido Kingdom in Lagos State, held every three years, is one of the most important

events in the local religious calendar.

The Ajido Kingdom's leader, Aholu Saheed Adamson, described the Zangbeto as a symbol of authority of the ethnic Ogu people and a "means of security of entire communities."

The Ogu inhabit coastal areas of Nigeria, Benin and

Togo. The West African region once was known as the Slave Coast because of the large number of slaves taken from there over centuries.

Beyond the slave trade, Ogu land is also noted for the voodoo widely practiced there. The use of the Zangbeto is said to date back to the 17th century.

"As the traditional police and court of the people the Zangbeto handles such cases as theft," Seton Idowu, who believes strongly in its spiritual powers, told the AP. "Everyone fears the Zangbeto and you can get into trouble if you go against the rules."

The beliefs hold that Zangbeto's punishment could range from fines to the banishment of an individual.

Outside influences have steadily eroded such traditional institutions, which Amosu said are being "bas-

tardized or criminalized as being fetish."

Meanwhile, he said, modern institutions like the police have failed to perform as effectively as the traditional ones they replace. Many people would rather take their case to the Zangbeto than to the police post, he said.

Nigerian authorities are increasingly tolerant of such festivals and their underlying beliefs as long as they are not criminal in nature. The Zangbeto Voodoo festival had the support of the government, with senior officials in attendance.

While turning to Zangbeto and other traditional figures reduces the burden on authorities, the resort to mob justice against suspected criminals, with some beaten to death, is widely seen in Nigeria as an indication of the loss of faith in the police and justice system. □



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Thai businessman convicted of selling fake bomb detectors

By KAWEEWIT KAEWJINDA BANGKOK (AP) —

A court in Thailand has convicted a local businessman of fraud for selling fake bomb detectors to the Thai government, five years after a court in the United Kingdom sentenced the British head of the company that supplied them to seven years in prison in a scandal that was worldwide in scale.

Thailand's military drew criticism and ridicule in 2010 when the GT200 bomb detectors — which were claimed to also be capable of detecting drugs and other substances — were exposed as worthless pseudo-scientific instruments.

Many millions of dollars of the devices were sold to the Thai army and other security forces around the world. Even after they were proven to be useless, they continued for a time to be used in several countries, including hot spots such as Iraq and southern Thailand, where there is an active Muslim insurgency.

The high price of the devices — and the fact that prices varied considerably — also raised suspicion that corruption was involved in their purchase.

The Thai government's Science and Technology Ministry found in 2010 that the detectors had a successful detection rate of only 20 percent. Nevertheless, then-army commander Gen. Anupong Paochinda — the interior minister in the current military government — denied any corruption and lauded the device's various "successes." Thailand had bought more than 700 of the detectors starting in 2004 at a total cost of about \$21 million.

The current defense minister, Prawit Wongsuwan, defended the military's handling of the affair Thursday,



In this Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009, file photo, a soldier patrols with a mobile explosive detector GT 200 at a hotel in Cha-Am, a resort town in southern Thailand.

Associated Press

sold by a loosely connected group of shady, mostly British operators. After Britain banned the export of one of the similar devices in 2010, the scheme started to unravel as independent tests proved the devices were totally ineffective and had no scientific basis. The United Kingdom banned the export of the GT200 devices in 2010 when it accused maker Global Technical Ltd. of fraud. British authorities that year raided the offices of Global Technical and two other makers of similar fraudulent bomb detectors. British businessman Gary Bolton, who led Global Technical, was sentenced to seven years in prison by a U.K. court in August 2013 and ordered to pay over \$1.6 million. □

telling reporters the devices had been tested and found working at the time of purchase, so there had been no wrongdoing by the military. Thai Defense Ministry spokesman Kongcheep Tantravanich said Thursday that Thai authorities had stopped using the GT200 devices "ever since foreign governments proved that they are ineffective" and that various military departments are gradually filing lawsuits against companies that sold the fake bomb detectors to them.

Sutthiwat Wathanakij, manager of AVIA Satcom Co. Ltd., on Wednesday was convicted of fraud for three GT200 sales contracts and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment. He had already received a 10-year prison sentence last week for selling the bomb detectors to the Thai army under 12 other sales contracts worth 600 million baht (\$18.5 million).

The GT200 was one of several similar fraudulent devices

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Brazil museum fire sparks soul searching about spending



In this Sept. 2, 2018 file photo, flames engulf Brazil's National Museum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

By MAURICIO SAVARESE
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Long before Brazil's National Museum went up in flames, the people who ran it were pleading for help to renovate the dilapidated 200-year-old building that held much of the nation's historical and scientific heritage.

They appealed for \$4.2 million in private donations three years ago — but received just \$240,000, according to the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, which oversees the museum. They'd turned to businesses for aid because government funds were declining as officials slashed budgets to cope with a recession.

The lack of investment may have doomed the museum, which was gutted on Sept. 2 and lost most of its 20 million artifacts, many of them literally priceless, including what it likely the oldest human fossil in the Americas. It was among the greatest blows to a museum anywhere in recent

times.

While the cause is still under investigation, the loss is causing belated soul-searching about why Latin America's largest economy had devoted so few resources to protecting and maintaining the museum, housed in a structure built for Brazil's now-defunct royal family.

"Brazil can't set its priorities. I still can't believe this tragedy happened," university dean Roberto Lehrer told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "It isn't only the state that failed the museum, it is also our society. There's money for Disney shows in Rio, but not for the museum."

Hours after the fire, Brazilian President Michel Temer allocated \$2.5 million in emergency funds for the museum, leading many to lament that it took a tragedy for authorities to make a priority of a national treasure. While there is not yet a full accounting of what was lost, museum administrators have estimated 90 percent of its holdings were

torched, including Egyptian antiquities, Brazilian indigenous art and documents going back hundreds of years.

The budget-squeezed museum had spent only \$4,000 on safety equipment such as fire alarms and extinguishers from 2015 to 2017, according to Contas Abertas — "Open Accounts" in English — a nonprofit that tracks spending. Meanwhile, it said, Brazil's Congress signed a \$120,000 contract last year to wash the cars of 19 lawmakers.

The museum languished even as the country lavished billions of dollars on sports stadiums and public works to host the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympics. Roughly \$1 billion was spent on the Mane Garrincha Stadium in the capital of Brasilia, and it's barely used today, despite costing \$170,000 a month in maintenance.

The news website UOL recently compared spending on the museum to Rio de Janeiro's most famed soccer venue: "Upgrades to

Maracana Stadium would have paid for 2,400 years of maintenance for the National Museum."

Discussions about spending priorities come at a time when Brazilians have been battered by near-daily revelations of vast sums raked off of public contracts by political corruption, in total several billion dollars over more than a decade. Launched in 2014, the "Car Wash" investigation into inflated construction contracts and kickbacks to politicians has brought down dozens of the country's biggest names, including jailed former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Ney Santos, chairman of Observatorio Social do Brasil, another nonprofit that tracks public spending, said Brazil clearly has the resources to finance small operations like the National Museum.

"The money exists, but those resources are wasted all year round," said Santos. "Brazil's society is less vocal than in other countries, and only wakes up momentarily

when some clearly avoidable tragedy occurs."

The museum had a yearly budget of \$1.75 million, most of which came from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. It got about \$125,000 in the past from other agencies, such as the Culture Ministry, but those funds had fallen to \$90,000 this year, according to museum officials.

Some funds came from the cost of admission to the museum, about \$1.25 per visitor.

In the wake of the fire, some government ministers blamed the university for not spending enough to maintain the museum. The university, which has about 70,000 students, says its overall budget has been squeezed as well, falling from \$112 million to \$102 million in 2017. So far this year, it has only received \$94 million for all its activities.

Officials said that has translated into cuts to many things, including museum maintenance.

Frustration over the loss has seeped into the country's presidential campaign.

Before the fire, only two of the main presidential candidates had mentioned investment in culture in their platforms: environmentalist Marina Silva and left-leaning Fernando Haddad. Since the blaze, other candidates have been promising more consistent funding and more attention to such institutions, though they have been light on details. Silva called the fire "a lobotomy in the Brazilian people" and pledged to increase funds for museums if elected. Haddad said "it is regrettable to see such neglect" in several Brazilian museums and cultural institutions, and promised change if elected.

One exception is poll leader Jair Bolsonaro, a far-right congressman who sometimes associates culture and art with left-leaning politics. "It caught fire already. What do you want me to do?" Bolsonaro told reporters a few days after the blaze. □

Associated Press

LOCAL



Coffee Talks



SAN NICOLAS — Coffee is a matcher. A lot of meetings, whether personal or business, are set with the words: "Let's meet for a coffee". The newly opened Community Museum in San Nicolas takes coffee as a matchmaker with YOU. Saturday they have the City of Sunrise, as San Nicolas is called, completely upside down with events, workshops, art,

music and food. But also ... a Coffee Talk. In the Mundi Health Café you can enjoy everything about coffee.

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Aruba Coffee Hub

Special guests are David Cybul, business man among other in the coffee trade and Benjamin Romero, writer of the book 'E negoshi di koffie na Aruba'. This interesting book informs you about the history of coffee in Aruba, the main players in the field and the route of the coffee Colombia-Aruba-United States. Beginning of the 60's Aruba was known as one of the most important export countries of coffee in the world without harvesting even one bean themselves. This commer-

cial wonder happened by the means of the vision and creativity of local business men grasping the chance to have a lucrative business that also created job opportunities in a time that tourism was still a baby. Romero's wish is to memorize this forgotten commercial activity that contributed to the socio-economic development of Aruba. According to him the island functioned as a pilot project for being a hub to the US and Europe. This book is his first book, published in 2016. □

International Coffee Day

Since 1983 this day has been commemorated as International Coffee day around the world where coffee is being produced and consumed. The first official date was October 1st of 2015, as agreed by the International Coffee Organization and was launched in Milan. This day is also used to promote fair trade coffee and to raise awareness for the plight of the coffee growers. Different events are being held where you can get all kinds of coffee with all kinds of tastes and in all sorts of presentations. Coffee is one of the most liked and well-known beverages around the world. This is a good day to recognize the hard work done daily by the producers of coffee. They make it possible for us to enjoy a nice cup of coffee every day. No matter the time of the day a cup of coffee is always welcome!!



A little bit about the story of the Coffee business between Guajira and Aruba

This area of the Caribbean Sea where this place is located known as "El Horno", is where the Guajiro businessman Jorge Romero Arteaga used to send coffee to Aruba. They use these small boats known as piraguas. This place close to the city of Riohacha was a heritage of the ancestors Romero, who accompanied General Jose Prudencio Padilla in the battle that took place at the Maracaibo Lake against Spain. As a gift, since they helped them win the battle, they were given this piece of land in the area of Camarones, where General Padilla was born.

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This is due to our mind conditioning and thus leads to a habitual pattern of judgement or labeling of people or circumstances around us. Why is it a fragment is only due to our inability of openness to a possibility of the person or circumstance being different than what we have been conditioned to perceive, limited mind made conditioning from our personal past beliefs and ideologies that has been picked up from childhood through our parents, friends and peers, plus close environmental conditions around us. Since one may not be aware of this tendency to judge, one may actually feel a sense of expansiveness or being right by placing an image of another being wrong. With enough inner stillness, one may be aware or have a discernment of these tendencies that is not beneficial for bringing in a fruitful relationship. Meditation is essential for arriving to a state of inner stillness of mind and thus brings clarity to every thought and emotion that may be chaotic within our own mental and emotional psyche. A healthy mental and emotional body results in a more effective way to work and live our lives where every moment is a joyous one.



Suresh Mirchumal is a spiritual writer. "Well, you can categorize it like that, although I don't call myself one. These thoughts come in effortlessly." His aim is in a way to reach out to whoever gets inspired or has an eye opening event within them that may transcend their current state of consciousness. "Or let's say current emotional state too. If one in a thousand benefits, that is already great." Due to the current world state, lots of struggles and stresses, we seem to lose touch with that inner peace that we long for, Suresh explains. "I wish to ease that through these small articles or tidbits." You will find his tidbits in Aruba Today, like a sunray of the day. If you wish to make use of Suresh his services like meditation or just a talk, please email to: TheDimensionofSilence@gmail.com.

Short films presentations by Fundacion CINEARUBA



ORANJESTAD — At the beginning of September Fundacion CINEARUBA launched a local production by the name of "Cuidad Oraño" (orange City) at the Crystal Theatre. Due to its popularity Fundacion CINEARUBA decided to present this production one last time. This will be at the CinemaOutdoor that will take place on Friday September 28, 2018 at Ateliers '89 in oranjestad.

Last year Fundacion CINEARUBA started with a

program in which they presented the films in the open air. This was named the Rooftop Film Club, which took place on the terrace of the second floor of the Art Academy building. This year the same event will be held but at a new location namely Ateliers '89. The CinemaOutdoor is basically the same concept as Rooftop Film Club in which they will be presenting artistic, individual and classic movies in open air. The selection is totally different of what people use to see

at the local cinemas. These are movies that leads to conversations about certain topics or give the public something to think about or analyse. These movies are food for thought.

CinemaOutdoor partnered up with Shortcutz Aruba, which is the only local platform of short films with

an international network. Short films of Aruba that take part in the Shortcutz Aruba will be presented at the international market at countries such as Brasil, Portugal, Germany, Netherlands, Angola, China and the UK. This Friday they will be presenting a musical film named "Cunucu Sessions", played by Ginely

and directed by Danny Martines. Another shortfilm being presented is TU from Brasil, directed by Hugo Pinto. For the month of October they will be presenting more local shortfilms at the Shortcutz Aruba. For more information visit their facebook page Fundacion CINEARUBA. ☐



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Honoring the Rapone's at Playa Linda Beach Resort

ORANJESTAD — Recently, Emely Ridderstaat, of Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Loyal and Friendly visitors of Aruba as Goodwill Ambassadors. The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, Transportation, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between 10-20 and more consecutive years.

The Honorees are Mr. Guido (Buddy) & Mrs. Edith Rapone, who have been coming to Aruba for 20 consecutive years and are staying at the Playa Linda Beach Resort. The honorees are in love with Aruba, especially the friendly people and the safety they feel when they are here.

Emely together with the Yvette Tromp of the Playa Linda Beach Resort presented the certificate to the honorees and handed over some presents to them and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years. □



Tourism also has its limitations and economic diversification



ORANJESTAD – Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) gave special attention on World Tourism Day through a conference named: Tourism &

Digital Transformation: How it impacts our lives.

Director of ATA, Ronella Tjin Asjoe-Croes declared the

theme regarding this day was in line with the World Tourism Organisation that reflects on the digital transformation in the tourism in-

dustry.

It is very important to see how Aruba has developed itself in the industry through digital transformation. It is time to reflect on the tourism product that has more than 60 years of existence and as is the case with any product, no matter that it is a destination, it does not only have its maturity but has its challenges too. According to Tjin Asjoe-Croes the model we are following with the goal for tourism to become an economical pillar by continuously expanding and developing it, has been reached.

We must continue putting attention into it, in order for it to be sustained. This is limited in expansion of volume but by taking the necessary steps to insure the tourism to continue being the industry with the highest economic income and contribute to the quality of life for our people. Also very important is for it to continue to be a satisfying industry for our visitors.

ATA tries to illustrate that tourism not only consists of economics but aspects such as social, environmental protection and culture. All these aspects goes hand-in-hand with the tourism. And the all need proper attention. If not, at the end of the day you will have a product that will not be attractive to the visitor. This will have a negative outcome to our quality of life. Eventhough it's our economic pillar, tourism has its limitations and economic diversification is important. ATA forecasts a continuous increase in our tourism industry and they are taking the necessary steps to make this possible through the following:

Innovation

During the conference ATA had two guest speakers that were the perfect examples to explain more about the digital transformation in the tourism industry. The Main speakers were Daniel Newman, co-founder of Futurum Research

and CEO of Broadsuite Media Group and Sam Sheffer a well-known Youtuber & Technologist. Sheffer used to work for big technology companies such as Engadget, The Verge and Mashable.

These speakers talked about the impact online media has on a tourist when they need to decide where will be their next vacation destination. They also gave ideas and suggestions to the public on different facilities and digital instruments that can be useful to make the tourism product better. Seeing the limitations Aruba has, being a small island, we can say that we are a few steps ahead compared to other tourist destinations in the region. The speakers admired the idea of ATA to put Wi-Fi in different parts of the island to make it a more pleasant and more accessible stay for the tourist. By doing this, the tourist will promote Aruba instantly from their point of view. This is certainly the best way to get free marketing. ATA also put "beacons" that way they can record which are the most visited places by the tourists. Through these "beacons" ATA aims in the future to be able to give immediate information to the tourist via messages that will inform them about events happening in the areas they are. This will elevate the experience for the tourist by giving them more options and that way they will contribute more to our economy during their stay. Both speakers stated that we need to be more innovative in order to secure our leadership in tourism.

The Minister of Transport Chris Romero, was present, representing the Minister of Tourism. The Minister of education Rudy Lampe and other members of the Parliament were also present at the conference.

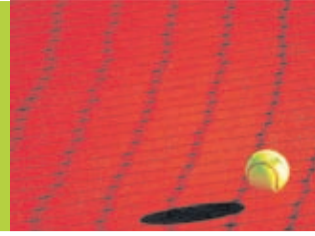
This report was done by Benjamin Romero.

Travel Tips



1. When checking-in, you will always need your valid passport, along with your ticket, e-ticket receipt or e-ticket confirmation. For some countries a Visa is also required.
2. For all US-bound departures, check-in three hours before your scheduled departure time.
3. For all US-bound flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the left side of building; follow the signs and head towards local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates. Aruba Airport provides full US Pre-Clearance service.
4. For all Non US departures, check-in may vary between airlines and destinations; always consult your airline for more information. Being at the airport 3 hours before your departure flight is always safe.
5. For all Non US flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the right side of building; follow the signs and head towards Local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates.
6. If traveling with a carry-on, there are restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols you can carry in your carry-on luggage. Always check with your airline on limitations.
7. Always check the weight limit of your baggage; excess weight may result in penalty fees.
8. Always label your bags and suitcases with your name, address and phone number.
9. Always leave all carry-on items unlocked while passing through screening points to not cause delays if these need to be inspected.
10. Avoid wearing big belt buckles, clothing with metal buttons, lots of jewelry etc. when traveling. If you have these on, remove all metal items and place these in a tray for screening. It is advisable to put all metal items in your carry-on luggage until you clear security. This will help speed up the process.
11. Remove shoes at checkpoint and place in tray for x-ray machine screening.
12. All electronic items should be placed in tray outside their case for x-ray screening.
13. Avoid packing foods and beverages in your check-in baggage. When traveling to the US, you have to comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More information <https://www.usda.gov/>.
14. If traveling with medication, please pack these in your carry-on luggage in their original packaging.
15. If you medical documentation, present this to the security checkpoint screener to inform them. The documentation is not required and will not exempt you from the screening process.
16. Take note of inadmissible items such as sharp objects, sporting goods, guns and firearms, martial arts and self-defense items, tools, explosive materials, flammable items, disabling chemicals and other items when traveling. More information available on www.airportaruba.com.

SPORTS



NFL defends lawsuit alleging Super Bowl ticket violations

By DAVID PORTER
Associated Press

The National Football League defended itself Thursday against charges that its ticketing policies for the 2014 Super Bowl violated New Jersey's consumer fraud law, in arguments before the state Supreme Court that reached a granular level with disputes over words in the statute including "the" and "those." The case was spurred by a 2014 federal lawsuit filed by a New Jersey man who claimed he was forced to pay more than double the \$800 face value for a ticket on the secondary market because of the NFL's policy of making just 1 percent of the tickets available to the public through a lottery. Josh Finkelman is seeking class-action status for himself and thousands of other fans in a case that could translate to millions of dollars in damages.

His attorney, Bruce Nagel, argued Thursday that the NFL's policy violated the part of New Jersey law requiring events to make 95 percent of tickets available to the public, considered the strictest law of its kind in the country at the time. That portion of the law has since been repealed.

"The NFL has never denied they never made 95 percent available," Nagel told the court. "That is proof positive that the statute not only is applicable but has been violated."

Attorneys for the NFL countered that the lottery didn't constitute a public sale, and thus didn't trigger the consumer fraud law.

Continued on Page 22

WINNING CITY



Cubs clinch 4th straight playoff spot, eye NL Central

Chicago Cubs' Albert Almora Jr., top, celebrates with teammates after hitting a walk-off single against the Pittsburgh Pirates during the 10th inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018, in Chicago.

Ryder Cup ready to start with pressure on for everyone

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France (AP) — Jim Furyk has spent four days watching his team play loose and confident, two key ingredients he hopes will allow the Americans to end 25 years without winning the Ryder Cup away from home.

He can only hope that's what he sees when the shots at Le Golf National really count.

"What would make me nervous?" Furyk said on the eve of the matches. "If I showed up in the morning and guys had a look on their face that made me nervous. I don't usually see that with this group."

Flags were raised, anthems were played and the partisan cheers began late Thursday afternoon to signal the end of a hype and anticipation of a Ryder Cup featuring two of the strongest teams the U.S. and Europe have presented at the same time.

Now it's time to play.

"I believe in this team, one through 12," European captain Thomas Bjorn said. Furyk chose to send off Ryder Cup rookie Tony Finau and three-time major champion Brooks Koepka in the opening fourballs match Friday against Justin Rose and rookie Jon Rahm.



Tiger Woods of the US places the cover of a water sprinkler as he jokes with Patrick Reeds, center, and Jordan Spieth, right, during a practice round of the Ryder Cup at Le Golf National in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, outside Paris, France, Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018.

Associated Press

He also broke up the Jordan Spieth-Patrick Reed partnership that had delivered five points in seven matches over the last two Ryder Cups.

Instead, Spieth gets to play with one of his best friends, Justin Thomas, a relationship that took root in France more than a decade ago when both wore American colors in the Evian Junior Masters.

"Very familiar with each other's games — have been for, shoot, over 10 years now," Spieth said. "So it's going to be really excit-

ing to be able to look at him on the first tee and kind of remember where we've come from, and we're both here."

Reed gets his hero — Tiger Woods — in the anchor match.

"We both feel like we're playing well, and we want to go out there and represent our country the best," said Reed, who in two Ryder Cups has been called "Captain America" because of his fist-pumping, ear-cupping, finger-shushing bravado. "The best way to do that is go out and

have some fun and try to play some good golf and do it the right way. And any time you get to tee it up with Big Cat, it's always fun." They play against British Open champion Francesco Molinari and Tommy Fleetwood.

Missing from the American lineup is Phil Mickelson, who will sit out the opening session for the first time since his Ryder Cup debut in 1995.

Bjorn has five Ryder Cup rookies on his side, and four of them will be walking to that first tee to hit a

shot before a grandstand that looks like it belongs at a football stadium, 72 feet high with a capacity of 6,928, unheard of for a golf tournament.

That starts with Rahm, the latest Spaniard who brings a big game and big emotion to an event that means so much to all of Europe. He will be with Rose, who has played effectively with Henrik Stenson the last two Ryder Cups.

Both captains delivered the same message: Their teams are so strong that they had loads of options and tough choices on whom to sit. Another session of foursomes follow Friday afternoon, and neither was willing to guarantee that everyone will have played by the end of the day.

Bjorn said he would accept a split of the morning matches considering he has four rookies playing, though he hopes for more. "You'd like to be ahead after any session, but when I look at these matches, they could be as tight as anything, all four of them, and it's impossible for me to predict what's going to happen," Bjorn said.

"What would surprise me?" he added. "I think I learned to not expect anything but surprises in this. It would surprise me if it's quiet on the first tee." □

RYDER CUP '18: Facts and figures for the 42nd matches

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France (AP) — Facts and figures for the 42nd Ryder Cup, which starts Friday at Le Golf National.

Format: Four matches of fourballs (better ball) and foursomes (alternate shot) on Friday and Saturday, 12 singles matches on Sunday. Points: The United States needs 14 points to retain the cup. Europe needs 14½ points to win the cup.

Series: United States leads 26-13-2.

Last time: In the first Ryder Cup since U.S. players had a stronger voice in the structure of its team, the American won 17-11 at



The Ryder cup trophy is on display during a press conference ahead of the 2018 Ryder Cup at the Golf National in Guyancourt, outside Paris, France, Monday, Sept. 24, 2018.

Associated Press

Hazeltine for their biggest Ryder Cup rout since 1981. For the first time since 1975, every American player contributed a point. Patrick Reed led the Americans with a 3-1-1 record, including a leadoff singles victory over Rory McIlroy.

Captains: Jim Furyk (United States), Thomas Bjorn (Europe).

European roster: Paul Casey, Tommy Fleetwood, Sergio Garcia, Tyrrell Hatton, Rory McIlroy, Francesco Molinari, Alex Noren, Thorbjorn Olesen, Ian Poulter, Jon Rahm, Justin Rose, Henrik Stenson. U.S. roster: Bryson DeChambeau, Tony

Finau, Rickie Fowler, Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, Phil Mickelson, Patrick Reed, Webb Simpson, Jordan Spieth, Justin Thomas, Bubba Watson, Tiger Woods.

Key statistic: The Americans have not won the Ryder Cup away from home since 1993.

Noteworthy: Phil Mickelson sets a Ryder Cup record by competing for the 12th time. He has had 55 teammates and 15 partners in his Ryder Cup career.

Quoteworthy: "Allez le bleu!" — European captain Thomas Bjorn to end the opening ceremony. It translates to "Go Blue!"

Friday pairings (fourballs): 2:20 a.m., Brooks Koepka-Tony Finau (US) vs. Justin Rose-Jon Rahm (Europe); 2:25 a.m., Dustin Johnson-Rickie Fowler (US) vs. Rory McIlroy-Thorbjorn Olesen (Europe); 2:40 a.m., Jordan Spieth-Justin Thomas (US) vs. Paul Casey-Tyrrell Hatton (Europe); 2:55 a.m. — Patrick Reed-Tiger Woods (US) vs. Francesco Molinari-Tommy Fleetwood (Europe).

Television (all times EDT): Friday, 2 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Golf Channel); Saturday, 2 a.m. to 3 a.m. (Golf Channel), 3 a.m. to 1 p.m. (NBC); Sunday, 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. (NBC). □

Olson's slam helps A's top Mariners 9-3, close in on Yankees

By The Associated Press
SEATTLE (AP) — Matt Olson hit a grand slam that capped a six-run fifth inning, Khris Davis added his major league-leading 47th home run and Oakland closed in on the New York Yankees for home-field advantage in next week's AL wild-card game. Oakland (96-63) improved to a big league-best 41-21 since the All-Star break and trails the Yankees (97-61) by 1½ games. New York holds the tiebreaker to host the Oct. 3 game; the wild-card winner advances to the Division Series against AL East champion Boston. With the score 3-all, Nick Martini hit an RBI single that chased Felix Hernandez (8-14), who made his first appearance since gaining American citizenship this week. Marcus Semien added a run-scoring single against Chasen Bradford before Olson's drive to right-center. Ryan Buchter (6-0) pitched a hitless inning in relief of Edwin Jackson, who gave up three runs and five hits in 4 1/3 innings. RAYS 8, YANKEES 7 ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Masahiro Tanaka gave up four runs and six hits over four-plus innings in his final start before the playoffs in New York's loss to Tampa Bay. New York started play with a 2 1/2-game lead over Oakland to host the AL wild-card game and has the tiebreaker. The Athletics played at Seattle later Wednesday night. Yankees manager Aaron Boone hasn't decided if Tanaka, JA Happ or Luis Severino will start against Oakland. A four-run, ninth-inning rally by the Yankees came up just short against Sergio Romo, who got the final four outs for his 24th save. Tanaka (12-6) was coming off a four-inning start last Thursday in which he allowed five runs and eight hits as the Yankees lost 11-6 to Boston. Tampa Bay center fielder Kevin Kiermaier was hit by

Tanaka's pitch in the first and left two innings later with what X-rays determined was a hairline fracture of the right foot. Reliever Yonny Chirinos (5-5) went four scoreless innings. Neil Walker hit a three-run homer for New York. RED SOX 19, ORIOLES 3, 1ST GAME ORIOLES 10, RED SOX 3, 2ND GAME BOSTON (AP) — Boston's Chris Sale struck out eight over 4 2/3 innings in his final tuneup for an expected start in the AL Division Series opener before Baltimore salvaged a split of the day-night doubleheader. In the opener, Boston handed the Orioles a franchise-record 112th loss. A major league-best 107-52, Boston opens the Division Series at home Oct. 5 against the New York Yankees or Oakland. Sale left after giving up Adam Jones' go-ahead, RBI double that made it 3-2 in the fifth. He threw 92 pitches, allowing three runs and four hits. Trey Mancini had a tie-breaking two-run single off Matt Barnes (6-4) in a three-run seventh and drove in three runs. Tanner Scott (3-2) worked 2 2/3 innings of one-run relief, and Paul Fry pitched three hitless innings for his second save. In the opener, J.D. Martinez had three of Boston's season-high 22 hits, including a three-run homer that brought his major league-leading RBIs total to 127. The Orioles (46-112) broke the franchise loss mark set by the 1939 St. Louis Browns went 43-111. David Price (16-7) settled down after an early stumble in his final tuneup before the playoffs. He allowed three runs — all in the second inning — six hits and three walks, striking out six before leaving with a 10-3 lead after five. Price is expected to start Game 2 of the AL Division Series against the New York Yankees or Oakland. Rafael Devers had four hits

and six RBIs, including two homers, and Mookie Betts had two hits to raise his major league-best batting average to .346. Xander Bogaerts and Blake Swihart also homered for Boston. Renato Nunez and Trey Mancini homered for Baltimore. Ryan Meisinger (2-1) was the loser. ANGELS 3, RANGERS 2 ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Shohei Ohtani hit a tie-breaking homer in the eighth inning, sending the Los Angeles Angels to a three-game sweep. Ohtani had an early RBI single before he connected off Texas reliever Chris Martin (1-5), his former teammate in Japan with the Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters. The two-way rookie went the opposite way for his 22nd homer of the season, bouncing it off the top of the left-field wall. Ohtani has driven in runs in three consecutive games and has 59 RBIs in his rookie season. Taylor Ward also homered for the Angels. Adrian Bel-



Seattle Mariners right fielder Ben Gamel leaps at the wall as the ball slips from the grasp of fans after a grand slam by Oakland Athletics' Matt Olson during the fifth inning of a baseball game Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018, in Seattle.

Associated Press

tre and Jurickson Profar homered for the Rangers, who have lost four of five and eight of 10. Andrew Heaney struck out 10 and yielded two runs over seven innings in a strong finish to the Angels left-hander's first full season back from Tommy John surgery. Jose Alvarez (6-4) pitched a perfect eighth and Jim Johnson worked the ninth for his second save. □

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Cubs, Brewers clinch NL Central playoff spots

By The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Shortly after their playoff spot was assured, the Chicago Cubs beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 7-6 on Albert Almora Jr.'s single with two outs in the 10th inning Wednesday night.

The NL Central-leading Cubs clinched their fourth straight postseason appearance when Milwaukee beat St. Louis. The Brewers, who sealed a playoff slot with their win, are a half-game behind Chicago. One of them will win the NL Central, the other will play in the NL wild-card game.

After Pittsburgh tied it in the ninth on a two-out, two-run double by Starling Marte, the Cubs bounced back to win. Ian Happ led off the 10th with a walk and was replaced by pinch-runner Terrance Gore. Mike Freeman's sacrifice moved up Gore, and he took third on a groundout. Almora singled to left on an 0-2 pitch from Richard Rodriguez (4-3).

Jason Heyward homered and drove in three runs for the Cubs. Javier Baez singled for his NL-leading 111th RBI as the Cubs won after blowing a five-run lead. Star third baseman Kris Bryant didn't play because of a bruised left wrist. Jose Osuna and Corey Dickerson homered for Pittsburgh.

Brandon Kintzler (3-3) got the only batter he faced in the top of the 10th to hit into a double play.

BREWERS 2, CARDINALS 1

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Milwaukee clinched its first playoff spot since 2011 by ensuring at least a spot in the NL wild-card game, helped when a rookie St. Louis pinch-runner fell on his way to the plate.

Jhoulys Chacin pitched



Milwaukee Brewers celebrate after defeating the St. Louis Cardinals 2-1 in a baseball game Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018, in St. Louis. The win clinched a postseason spot for the Brewers.

Associated Press

five shutout innings and Travis Shaw hit a pair of RBI singles to help the Brewers completed a three-game sweep.

The Cardinals missed a big chance to tie it in the eighth inning. Matt Carpenter walked and was lifted for pinch-runner Adolis Garcia. Jose Martinez then hit a slow roller to third baseman Mike Moustakas, who threw wildly to first. Garcia was waved home but fell halfway to the plate, allowing second baseman Hernan Perez to easily throw him out to end the inning.

Chacin (15-8), who had lost his last three decisions, gave up one run on just one hit over five innings. Xavier Ceden, Corbin Burnes, Josh Hader and Jeremy Jeffress combined for four shutout innings as the Brewers held the Cardinals to a season-low two hits. Jeffress earned his 13th save in 18 chances.

Chasen Shreve (3-4) took

the loss.

ROCKIES 14, PHILLIES 0

DENVER (AP) — Hard-throwing German Marquez started with eight straight strikeouts to match a modern-era big league record, and Colorado routed Philadelphia to take over the NL West lead.

David Dahl homered for the third straight game, and the Rockies went deep four times in all as they extending their winning streak to six.

Colorado moved a half-game ahead of Los Angeles for the division lead.

Marquez (14-10) allowed three hits in seven innings and struck out 11 to set a Rockies record with 221 for the season, seven more than Ubaldo Jimenez's total in 2010. By striking out his first eight batters, he tied a post-1900 mark set by Houston's Jim Deshaies in 1986, and equaled by the New York Mets' Jacob deGrom in 2014. The overall record

of nine was set by New York's Mickey Welch in an NL game in 1884.

Nick Pivetta (7-14) was the loser.

DIAMONDBACKS 7, DODGERS 2

PHOENIX (AP) — A.J. Pollock hit a three-run homer and Arizona dropped Los Angeles to second place in the NL West.

The Dodgers' second loss in a row put them a half-game behind Colorado.

Arizona chased Ross Stripling (8-6) with three runs in the second inning and Pollock hit his three-run homer in the fifth for a 6-2 lead.

Zack Greinke (15-11) overcame a shaky start to allow two runs and strike out six in six innings. Socrates Brito hit his first big league homer in two years and David Peralta hit his 30th of the season in Arizona's final home game.

NATIONALS 9, MARLINS 3, 7 INNINGS

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bryce Harper was 0 for 4 with two strikeouts in the rain-shortened game that many expect was his last at Nationals Park as a Washington player.

Harper can become a free agent at season's end. The storm arrived as Harper stood in the on-deck circle while the last out of the sev-

enth was recorded.

Nationals rookie Victor Robles had a career-high four hits, including a three-run homer and a two-run double, and also stole a base. Brian Anderson homered for the Marlins.

Wander Suero (4-1) got the win with an inning of scoreless relief. Wei-Yin Chen (6-12) was the loser.

METS 3, BRAVES 0

NEW YORK (AP) — Jacob deGrom was dominant in what likely was his final pitch for the NL Cy Young Award, throwing eight stellar innings for New York and leaving with a major league-best 1.70 ERA.

DeGrom (10-9) made his final regular-season start, striking out 10 and allowing just two singles against NL East champion Atlanta. He retired the final 20 hitters after allowing a single to Johan Camargo.

DeGrom gave up no more than three runs in his last 29 starts to extend his own single-season record. The All-Star ace also matched the overall mark set by Jake Arrieta in 2015-16.

Seth Lugo threw a scoreless ninth for his third save.

Luke Jackson (1-2) was the loser. Atlanta had won six straight.

ROYALS 6, REDS 1

CINCINNATI (AP) — Rookie Heath Fillmyer struck out a career-high nine, Adalberto Mondesi tripled, stole two bases and scored twice, and Kansas City beat Cincinnati to wrap up its road schedule.

Whit Merrifield, who went into the game tied for the American League lead in hits and leading in stolen bases, extended his season-high hitting streak to 16 games with a third-inning single. He also stole two bases. Alex Gordon tacked on a solo home run.

The only run Fillmyer allowed was Jose Peraza's 14th homer in the first inning. Fillmyer (4-2) allowed four hits and two walks while tying his career high with 7 1/3 innings. Fillmyer also had his first major league hit and RBI with a sixth-inning double. Cody Reed (1-3) was the loser. □



Whiff of offense: Ks top hits, lowest average since '72

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The most-heard sound at major league ballparks this year was "Strike three!"

A whiff of offense would be nice rather than all those nights filled with nonstop whiffs.

Strikeouts will exceed hits over a full season for the first time in major league history. The overall batting average has dropped to its lowest level since 1972, the year before the designated hitter. Lefty hitters — facing smothering defensive shifts — have fared even worse, with their lowest average since 1968, before the pitcher's mound was lowered.

Starters throw fewer pitches and hard-throwing relievers are changed more frequently. The game has transformed at a dizzying pace.

"We need to thoughtfully review the trends," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said Wednesday.

Manfred looks ahead to a postseason featuring 20-year-old Atlanta star Ronald Acuna Jr., Boston, the New York Yankees and Chicago Cubs and possibly Los Angeles Dodgers, too. But much of the offseason will be spent analyzing historic changes.

There were 40,196 strikeouts and 40,098 hits through Wednesday, and Ks exceeded hits over a full month for the first time in April, then again in June and September. Before this year, the previous low differential for a full month was in April 2017, when there were 138 more hits than strikeouts, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Strikeouts have set a record for the 11th consecutive season, surpassing last year's 40,104.

The .248 big league batting average is down seven percentage points from last year and a Steroids Era high of .271 in 1999, part of

an all-or-nothing approach at the plate. And the .244 average for left-handed hitters is the lowest since .242 in 1968, according to Elias, diminished by defensive shifts placing three infielders on the right side. No wonder batters swing for the fences.

"Years ago, if a player had more strikeouts than hits, they didn't get out of Class A ball," said Dan Duquette, the Baltimore Orioles' executive vice president of baseball operations, who went on to suggest his solution.

"Ted Williams had some good ideas: three balls and you go to first base; make home plate smaller so you don't have to defend as much territory," Duquette said.

"It's something to consider, because, really, it's an entertainment business, right? That's what the fans want to see. It's a good place to start the discussion. Who am I to argue with the greatest hitter that ever lived?"

The analytics revolution has metamorphosed this most traditional of sports. Innings per starting pitcher dropped from 5.89 in 2012 to 5.38 this year and pitches per start from 95 to 88 over the same period, according to Sports Info Solutions. Pitches per game for both teams rose from 7.68 to 8.34 over that span, according to Major League Baseball, with average fastball velocity increasing from 91.6 mph to 92.8 mph over the past six years, according to Sports Info.

"The players have been forced to adapt a lot over the last few years based on the changes that are being recommended to them, that are being guided by those not on the field. So the game has changed quite a bit," said players' association head Tony Clark, a former All-Star first baseman. "The question that I believe we all need to ask is based on where the



In this Thursday, Sept. 13, 2018 file photo, St. Louis Cardinals' Francisco Pena, left, reacts after being called out on strikes, as Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Austin Barnes looks on during the seventh inning of a baseball game Thursday, Sept. 13, 2018, in St. Louis.

Associated Press

game is, where the game appears to be going, if the current baseball fans find it appealing, if they are interested in the way the game is being played."

No big league team had fewer than 50 sacrifice bunts in 1972 and no club dropped below double digits until Texas had nine in 2005. This year, Toronto has five, Oakland six, and Boston and the Los Angeles Angels seven each.

No pitcher has thrown more than two complete games. The previous low for a leader was four.

James Shields with 11 in 2011 has been the only pitcher to reach double digits since Randy Johnson in 1999. The game was far different when Fernando Valenzuela had 20 in 1986; this year's major league total is 41.

"You see the bullpen earlier," said Colorado's Carlos Gonzalez, the 2010 NL batting champion. "Back in the day, the biggest thing for a pitcher was going the distance. You don't see a lot of complete games anymore. I feel like as a hitter, you have a better chance if you face a guy more than two or three times. Nowadays, you might face a

starter twice and then get a lot of matchups: lefties on lefties, righties on righties." Scoring at 4.45 runs per game is down only slightly from last year's 4.65 and up from its recent low of 4.07 in 2014, with home runs averaging 1.15 per club per game, a decrease from last year's 1.26 record.

The "Three True Outcomes" have become the talk of dugouts, front offices and fans: walks, strikeouts and home runs.

"People get locked into one type of swing, and they're going to stick with it no matter what you do on the defensive side," said Minnesota manager Paul Molitor, a Hall of Famer. "I think that's why the effectiveness continues on the shift."

Manfred says changes are understandable.

"I am not one to wail about the use of analytics," he said. "You can't stop really competitive, smart people."

MLB and the union already have been talking. Their challenge is to decide whether narrowly tailored rules changes will counter changes, such as the use of minor league options

and the disabled list to expand pitching staffs from 12-13 to what in effect is 17-18 for many clubs. The sides had an agreement in the last round of bargaining to expand the active roster from 25 to 26 from the start of the season through Aug. 31 and to lower it from 40 to 28 from Sept. 1 on, but the players backed out. Most teams would have carried another reliever.

"I think it would have solved an even bigger problem, which is playing games differently in the month of September," Manfred said. "It was a trade that I was prepared to make at the time I was doing the Basic Agreement. It was a trade I'm prepared to make now." One trend players and management like: the average time of a nine-inning game has dropped to 3:00:35 from a record 3:05:11 last year, helped by new restrictions on mound visits. Trips to the mound without a pitching change have dropped from 7.41 to 4.00. "I don't know if that's necessarily the criteria as much as has it adversely affected the guys on the mound?" Clark said. "And the commentary that we've heard is no." □

NFL sticking with officiating emphasis on quarterback hits

By **BARRY WILNER**

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NFL is sticking with its officiating emphasis on quarterback hits, including those in which the tackler uses all or most of his body weight when falling on the quarterback.

NFL football operations chief Troy Vincent said Thursday that the powerful competition committee has clarified to game officials the techniques used in such hits, which have been a source of debate through the first three weeks of the schedule. Green Bay linebacker Clay Matthews has been called for three of them, two of which appeared to be normal tackles.

A lack of consistency on such calls also has been a source of contention throughout the league. In its regularly scheduled conference call, the committee reviewed video of such plays from 2017 and this year.

"In reiterating its position on quarterback protection," Vincent says, "the committee determined there would be no changes to the point of emphasis approved this spring, or to the rule of which the body weight provision has been in place since 1995."

The inconsistency led Matthews to suggest the league has gone soft. He argued that what con-



In this Sept. 16, 2018, file photo, Green Bay Packers' Clay Matthews tackles Minnesota Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins during the second half of an NFL football game, in Green Bay, Wis.

Associated Press

stitutes a clean hit is anybody's guess nowadays. "I don't know if that statement really expresses how they're going to call it moving forward," he said Thursday, adding if it will be status quo, "If that's the case, that's truly unfortunate because I think I speak on behalf of everybody that doesn't like the rule and the way it's being called and the way it's being offici-

ated. " Furthermore after seeing the video, too, all hits on the quarterback that came from straight on — which is what they teach you since peewee football with running backs, receivers or whatever, is to approach them head on if you can — those were all illegal hits, much like the two hits I had on Cousins and (Alex) Smith last week, which were con-

veniently left out of the video."

Compounding the complaints: Dolphins DE William Hayes tore his right ACL trying to avoid landing on Raiders QB Derek Carr.

"He was trying to not put body weight on the quarterback," coach Adam Gase said of Hayes. "His foot got caught in the ground."

"He's one of our leaders and best run defender.

That's going to be a tough one for us to swallow."

Many of the calls have been difficult for defensive players and their coaches to swallow, and they've even gotten some support from quarterbacks.

"It helps me out because I'm a quarterback," said Deshaun Watson of the Texans. "But some of the calls are just kind of crazy." The competition committee's decision to remain with the status quo doesn't mean there will continue to be a flurry of such penalties. By clarifying the technique, the league is attempting to find some uniformity in the calls. "I think we all have felt like it's all gone a little bit too far," said Fox analyst Mike Pereira, the former head of NFL officials. "But I think it'll seek a level that will get it back in sync with what the players think and what we all think. "You know any time you put a new point of emphasis in, there's a point of adjustment to the players and the officials ... so again, an adjustment by both groups, the players and the officials."

There have been 34 roughing-the-passer calls so far. While that works out to just one flag for every 100 pass attempts, it represents a massive increase over previous years. There were 16 such penalties through three weeks last season and 20 the year before that. □

TICKET

Continued from Page 17

Attorney Jonathan Pressment said it has been known for years — including by those in New Jersey who sought to attract the game — that the league's signature event doesn't release tickets to the public in the same way as music concerts or even other sporting events. Most tickets go to the league's 32 teams plus sponsors and other insiders.

"What the plaintiff is really asking this court to do is declare that the first and only Super Bowl held in New Jersey was an unlawful event that somehow unfolded in plain view in front of the

state's public officials, from the governor to the attorney general," Pressment said. Both sides withstood pointed questions from the justices, some of whom appeared skeptical of the NFL's claim that the lottery wasn't a public sale.

"That doesn't seem to make sense," Justice Barry Albin said during one exchange. Asked by Chief Justice Stuart Rabner whether it would be considered a public sale if the NFL sold all the tickets in a lottery, Pressment said it wouldn't. "Then what is it?" Rabner asked.

"It's a contest. It offers fans an opportunity to have a chance to purchase tick-

ets," Pressment replied. The law's language also came in for some parsing that could go a long way toward determining how the dispute is decided.

Nagel argued that the law's reference to 95 percent of "the tickets" and "those tickets" referred to all tickets for an event — in the case of the Super Bowl, about 82,000 tickets at MetLife Stadium. Pressment argued the phrases referred only to the tickets made available to the public — in this case, the 1,000 tickets in the lottery.

If the state Supreme Court rules in Finkelman's favor, the lawsuit will proceed in federal court. A federal



In this Feb. 1, 2014, file photo, a sign for NFL football's Super Bowl XLVIII stands in front of MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

judge in New Jersey had twice dismissed the lawsuit in recent years, but the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Ap-

peals in Philadelphia ruled last December the case could go forward pending the state court's ruling. □



In this April 7, 2017, file photo, U.S. captain Jim Courier reacts during a Davis Cup world group quarterfinal tennis match between Australia's Jordan Thompson and Jack Sock, of the U.S., in Brisbane, Australia.

Associated Press

Courier to AP: Decided in '17 to leave as Davis Cup captain

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

Jim Courier says he decided a year ago to step aside as captain of the U.S. Davis Cup team after the 2018 competition ended.

The U.S. Tennis Association announced Thursday that Courier was "stepping down," less than two weeks after the Americans lost to host Croatia 3-2 in the Davis Cup semifinals.

The USTA's news release did not say why he was leaving after eight years on the job. In an email to The Associated Press, Courier said that the choice to walk away was his and that he determined "at the end of 2017 that 2018 would be my final year as captain."

He added that he revealed his impending departure to players, staff and USTA President Katrina Adams at the team's closing dinner in Croatia on Sept. 16, after the matches there concluded.

"The reason I made 2018 my final year was my view that eight years was the right amount of time for me to lead the team," Courier wrote to the AP.

Whoever the USTA brings aboard to replace Courier will be its first captain to operate in the new Davis Cup setup that was approved by the International Tennis Federation last month and takes effect next year, including a season-ending,

18-team tournament at a neutral site.

"The format change did not factor into my thinking, as it was far from a certainty when I made the decision," Courier wrote.

He said he had been working under a one-year contract in each of 2017 and 2018, after having two-year deals over his first six years as the U.S. captain.

The United States had a 10-8 record in World Group play since Courier was appointed in October 2010, twice making it as far as the semifinals.

Among the players on Courier's rosters were Andy Roddick, John Isner and the Bryan brothers.

The country has won a record 32 Davis Cup titles but none since 2007.

Courier said the highlights of his captaincy, "from a competition standpoint," were beating a Swiss team that featured Roger Federer and Stan Wawrinka on the road in 2012 and the "near comeback" against Croatia this month.

Courier was part of Davis Cup-winning teams as a player in 1992 and 1995.

He also won four Grand Slam singles titles and reached No. 1 in the rankings.

The 48-year-old retired from the professional tour in 2000 and was elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2005. □



In this July 14, 2012, file photo, U.S. women's Olympic basketball players Diana Taurasi (12) and Sue Bird (6) watch during practice in Washington.

Associated Press

Healthier living helps USA veterans Bird, Taurasi on court

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer
SAN CRISTOBAL DE LA LAGUNA, Spain (AP) —

Veterans Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi each had one of their best WNBA seasons.

Both players credit changing the way they take care of their bodies off the court for their successes on it.

Eating healthier, getting more rest and doing more stretching has helped. Also, the USA Basketball mainstays are only playing in the WNBA during the summer and not overseas in the offseason. For nearly a decade, the duo played more than 100 games a year with little time for rest and recovery.

WNBA players make most of their money playing in more lucrative leagues in Russia, China and Europe during the winter. "I think there's so much more information on diet and recovery and taking

care of the body," said the 36-year-old Taurasi. "In my career, my first couple of years, until now. I changed the way I lived my life — from what I eat to how I rest. Therapy to the stuff off the court that makes sure you are fit on the court. I had to change the way I looked at basketball and myself and my career."

Bird made the changes a few years back and credits working with sports performance consultant Susan King Borchardt. It's clearly paid off, with Bird and her Seattle Storm teammates winning the WNBA title this month. "She's the one I credit for saving my career," said Bird, who turns 38 next month.

One innovation Bird uses is the WHOOP fitness tracker. It's a little black band on her wrist, along with teammates Breanna Stewart and Jewell Loyd.

"Basically, it's a heart monitor, on top of that, it has a unique tracking system that helps you with your recovery," Bird said.

"It monitors if you have a workout, what your heart rate is, how hard your workout was. Where it really comes in will be to tell you how much sleep they recommend for you that night. Tonight, you need eight hours or 10 hours, it varies." For the past year and a half, Bird answers a few questions on her phone and the WHOOP app tells her how much sleep she got. That data is also available to Borchardt. They come up with a plan to figure out what Bird needs for peak performance.

The younger players have taken notice. Stewart, the WNBA MVP of the regular season and finals, approached Bird in late March about her routine. □

Into the fold? What's next for Instagram as founders leave

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

When Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger sold Instagram to Facebook in 2012, the photo-sharing startup's fiercely loyal fans worried about what would happen to their beloved app under the social media giant's wings.

None of their worst fears materialized. But now that its founders have announced they are leaving in a swirl of well wishes and vague explanations, some of the same worries are bubbling up again — and then some. Will Instagram disappear? Get cluttered with ads and status updates? Suck up personal data for advertising the way its parent does? Lose its cool?

Worst of all: Will it just become another Facebook? "It's probably a bigger challenge (for Facebook) than most people realize," said Omar Akhtar, an analyst at the technology research firm Altimeter. "Instagram is the only platform that is growing. And a lot of people didn't necessarily make the connection between Instagram and Facebook." Instagram had just 31 million users when Facebook snapped it up for \$1 billion; now it has a billion. It had no ads back then; it now features both display and video ads, although they're still restrained compared to Facebook. But that could quickly change. Facebook's growth has started to slow, and Wall Street has been pushing the company to find new ways to increase revenue.

Instagram has been a primary focus of those efforts. Facebook has been elevating Instagram's profile in its financial discussions. In July, it unveiled a new metric for analysts, touting that 2.5 billion people use at least one of its apps — Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp or Messenger — each month. While not particularly revealing, the measurement underscores the growing importance Facebook places on those secondary apps.

Facebook doesn't dis-



In this Tuesday, June 19, 2018, file photo, Kevin Systrom, CEO and co-founder of Instagram, prepares for an announcement about IGTV in San Francisco.

Associated Press

close how much money Instagram pulls in, though Wedbush analyst Michael Pachter estimates it'll be around \$6 billion this year, or just over 10 percent of Facebook's expected overall revenue of about \$55.7 billion.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has long seen Instagram's promise. At the time, it was by far Facebook's largest acquisition (although it was dwarfed by the \$19 billion Zuckerberg paid for WhatsApp two years later). And it was the first startup allowed to operate mostly independently.

That has paid off big time. Not only did Instagram reach 1 billion users faster than its parent company, it also succeeded in cloning

Snapchat's popular "Stories" feature, dealing a serious blow to that social network upstart and succeeding where Facebook's own attempts had repeatedly failed. Instagram also pioneered a long-form video feature to challenge YouTube, another big Facebook rival.

Recently, Instagram has been on a roll. In June, Systrom traveled to New York to mark the opening of its new office there, complete with a gelato bar and plans to hire hundreds of engineers. Only a month earlier, Instagram had moved into sparkly new offices in San Francisco. In a July earnings call, Zuckerberg touted Instagram's success as a function of its integration with Facebook, claiming that it

used parent-company infrastructure to grow "more than twice as quickly as it would have on its own." But Instagram has also been a case study in how to run a subsidiary independently — especially when its parent is mired in user-privacy problems and concerns about election interference, fake news and misinformation. And especially when its parent has long stopped being cool, what with everyone and their grandma now on it. Instagram's simple design — just a collection of photos and videos of sunsets, far-away vacations, intimate breakfasts and baby close-ups — has allowed it to remain a favorite long after it became part of Facebook. If people go to Twitter to

bicker over current events and to Facebook to see what old classmates are up to, Instagram is where they go to relax, scroll and feast their eyes.

So, will that change?

"I don't think Zuckerberg is dumb," Akhtar said. "He knows that a large part of Instagram's popularity is that it's separate from Facebook."

As such, he thinks Facebook would be wise to reassure users that what they love about Instagram isn't going to change — that they are not going to be forced to integrate with Facebook. "That'll go a long way," he said.

Internally, the challenge is a bit more complicated. While Systrom and Krieger didn't say why they're leaving, their decision echoes the recent departure of WhatsApp's co-founder and CEO Jan Koum, who resigned in April. Koum had signaled years earlier that he would take a stand if Facebook's push to increase profits risked compromising core elements of the WhatsApp messaging service, such as its dedication to user privacy. When Facebook started pushing harder for more revenue and more integration with WhatsApp, Koum pulled the ripcord.

One sign that additional integration may be in Instagram's future: Zuckerberg in May sent longtime Facebook executive Adam Mosseri to run Instagram's product operation. Mosseri replaced longtime Instagrammer Kevin Weil, who was shuffled back to the Facebook mothership. That likely didn't sit well with Instagram's founders, Akhtar and other analysts said. Now that they're gone as well, Mosseri is the most obvious candidate to head Instagram.

"Kevin Systrom loyalists are probably going to leave," Akhtar said.

Which means Facebook may soon have a new challenge on its hands: Figuring out how to keep Instagram growing if it loses the coolness factor that has bolstered it for so long. □

US stock indexes rise as Apple and Amazon climb

By MARLEY JAY

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks are climbing Thursday as Apple and Amazon both jump. Health care companies are also higher and oil prices are bouncing back after they slipped a day earlier. Bed Bath & Beyond is plunging after it the company cut its annual forecasts following a weak second quarter. The dollar is trading higher against other currencies, sending prices for precious metals lower.

KEEPING SCORE: The S&P 500 index rose 19 points, or 0.7 percent, to 2,925 as of 12:05 p.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 167 points, or 0.6 percent, to 26,552. The Nasdaq composite climbed 71 points, or 0.9 percent, to 8,061. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks added 4 points, or 0.3 percent, to 1,695.

APPLE OF HIS EYE: Apple rose after JPMorgan Chase analyst Samik Chatterjee said the stock could climb



In this May 17, 2018, file photo an American flag hangs above the bell podium on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press

another 20 percent by the end of next year. Chatterjee said the company was successfully building up its services businesses such as music and payments, which could bring in 20 percent of Apple's annual revenue in the next few years. Chatterjee said

the company might make acquisitions in the gaming, automotive or smart speaker businesses.

Apple rose 2.2 percent to \$225.34. Elsewhere in the technology sector, Salesforce.com rose 1.3 percent to \$160.38. Internet companies also rose. Google's

parent company Alphabet rose 1.6 percent to \$1,212.36 and Facebook rose 1.9 percent to \$170.06. Amazon, the most valuable company on the U.S. market after Apple, rose 1.7 percent to \$2,008.34 after Stifel analyst Scott Devitt forecast more revenue for

its retail, advertising and web services units and raised his price target to \$2,525 a share. That would value Amazon at about \$1.2 trillion.

BLOODBATH: Bed Bath & Beyond plunged 23.4 percent to \$14.42 after the home goods and furnishings company reported earnings that fell far short of what analysts were expecting. The company also lowered its profit forecast for the rest of the year and said it expects lower sales. The stock has dropped from \$75 to \$14 in less than four years and is trading at its lowest price since March 2000. Several other companies that reported quarterly results also traded lower. Cruise line operator Carnival gave up 5 percent to \$63.60 after it said prices for recent bookings have been lower than they were a year ago. Conagra Brands, the parent of Chef Boyardee and Hebrew National, fell 6.2 percent to \$33.81 after its profit and sales fell short of Wall Street projections. □

August orders for US durable goods jump 4.5 percent

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER

WASHINGTON (AP)

— Orders for long-lasting U.S. factory goods rose at a healthy pace last month, though the increase was mostly driven by a surge in aircraft demand.

The Commerce Department said Thursday that orders increased 4.5 percent in August, the most in six months. Excluding aircraft, cars, and other transportation equipment, however, orders increased just 0.1 percent.

U.S. manufacturing is expanding at a solid pace, with orders up 9.2 percent year-to-date. Consumers are confident and spending more, and businesses have stepped up investment in machinery and equipment. Still, President Trump's trade battles with China, Europe, and Canada pose a risk in the coming months. A category of orders that is a proxy for

business investment fell 0.5 percent in August after two strong months. Such orders are up 7.4 percent this year. Orders for metals such as steel and aluminum rose 0.9 percent, after two months of flat or declining demand. Some of that increase may reflect the higher prices that steel and aluminum makers can now command with the Trump administration's 25 percent tariffs tamping down imports. Computer makers and auto companies reported declining orders.

Other measures of the factory sector also point to solid growth. A survey of purchasing managers found that factory activity expanded in September at its fastest pace in 14 years. Production soared and manufacturers added jobs at a faster pace.

And a measure of factory output tracked by the Federal Reserve rose 0.2 per-



In this July 5, 2018, photo workers assemble the Afloat water mattresses at the factory in Corona, Calif.

Associated Press

cent in August, led by a big increase in auto production.

The economy expanded at a 4.2 percent annual rate in the second quarter, according to a separate report released Thursday. □




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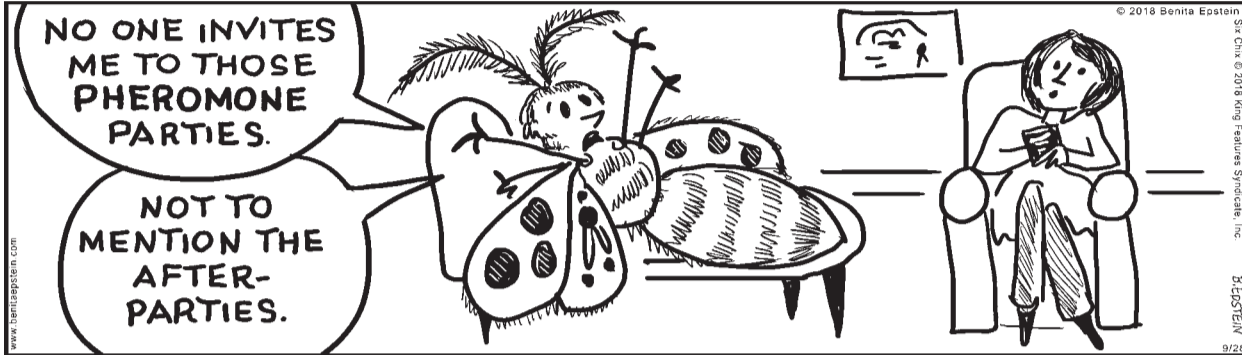
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Conceptis Sudoku

8			3					9
			1					7
		4		2	7			3
6			7	8				1
7		4	1					2
2		6	8		7			
8				3				
9			4					5

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 9/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

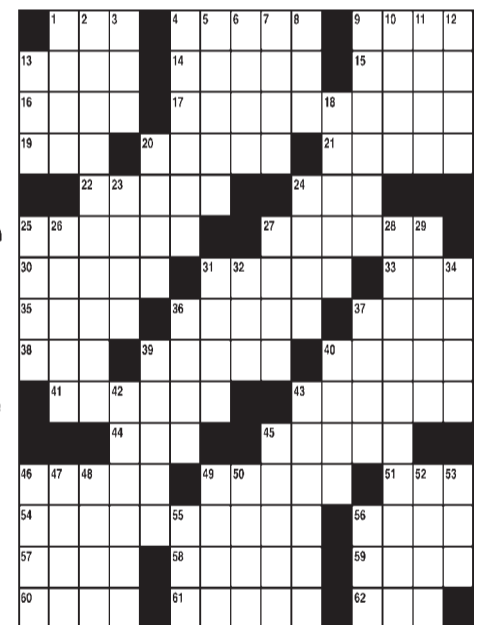
9	2	8	1	6	4	5	7	3
1	7	3	2	5	8	6	4	9
6	5	4	3	9	7	8	1	2
4	3	1	5	7	2	9	8	6
8	6	7	4	3	9	1	2	5
2	9	5	8	1	6	4	3	7
7	8	9	6	2	1	3	5	4
5	1	2	9	4	3	7	6	8
3	4	6	7	8	5	2	9	1

ACROSS

- 1 Tiger or tabby
- 4 Rarin' to go
- 9 Part of the foot
- 13 Dad
- 14 Aerosol
- 15 Store event
- 16 Sports channel
- 17 Safeguard; defense
- 19 Suffix for affection or passion
- 20 Ships' bows
- 21 Breathing organs
- 22 Huck Finn's creator
- 24 Blind as a ...
- 25 Craving for water
- 27 Strong connective tissues
- 30 Seeps out
- 31 ... ballistic; flying off the handle
- 33 ... a jungle out there!
- 35 Bed for one
- 36 Facial hair
- 37 Clothing fastener
- 38 Item for confession
- 39 Out of ...; not oneself
- 40 Terra- ...; brownish orange
- 41 Boaster's problem
- 43 Lurch out of control
- 44 Word of disgust
- 45 Beer
- 46 Laziness
- 49 Point the finger at
- 51 Children's running game
- 54 Cave in
- 56 Headfirst plunge
- 57 Hotpoint appliance
- 58 Not as coarse
- 59 Delete
- 60 Orangey drink
- 61 "Tosca" or "Rigoletto"
- 62 Rose Kennedy's youngest

DOWN

- 1 Toss
- 2 Mouthwatering
- 3 Sunbather's reward
- 4 ... de corps; camaraderie



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 9/28/18

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

OVER	OF THE	SCAT
DEAF	FRAIL	HOB
DESK	FASTIDIOUS	
SPY	WINK	RESTS
SHACK	WIL	
SUTURE	WINDED	
ERRED	CHALK	VIP
MAES	GAUDY	GENE
ILE	DIRGE	FORGO
STRIFE	CANYON	
EAT	SIN	EW
URBAN	TICS	SHAM
REALESTATE	MENU	
GALL	REPEL	ARTS
EMMY	SASSY	NEST

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- 5 Cook's accessory
- 6 Expand
- 7 Dines
- 8 Bread for a Reuben
- 9 Shrewd
- 10 Picnic spoiler
- 11 Wooden-soled shoe
- 12 Egg layers
- 13 Word attached to nut or coat
- 18 Sound of a fire bell
- 20 Go by, as time
- 23 Architect Christopher
- 24 Tie up
- 25 Tricycle riders
- 26 TV's Mandel
- 27 Gentlemen
- 28 Cold period
- 29 Virginia, for one
- 31 Bit of bacteria
- 32 Cereal grain
- 34 Bridge
- 36 "Nonsense!"
- 37 Blister or boil
- 39 Vision
- 40 Parakeet's home
- 42 Day trip
- 43 Cellphone feature
- 45 Procrastinator's word
- 46 Aberdeen resident
- 47 Mauna Loa's output
- 48 ...-minded; willing to reconsider
- 49 Radar screen image
- 50 Lois ...; Clark Kent's love
- 52 Enthusiastic
- 53 Acquire
- 55 Martian's vehicle
- 56 Nickname for Dorothy

Warm waters boosted 2017's major hurricane tally, study says

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Atlantic's warmer waters triggered the unusual number of major hurricanes last year, according to a new study that predicts the region could see a couple of extra whopper storms each year by the end of the century.

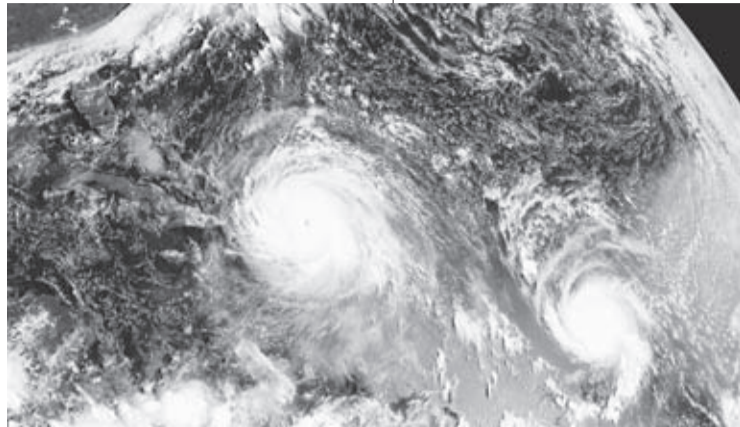
Six major hurricanes — with winds of at least 111 mph (178 kph) — spun around the Atlantic last year, including Harvey, Irma and Maria which hit parts of the United States and the Caribbean. Since 2000, the Atlantic has averaged three major hurricanes a year. Before that the average was closer to two.

It may go up to five to eight major hurricanes a year around the year 2100, according to a study in Thursday's journal Science.

"We will see more active hurricane seasons like 2017 in the future," said lead author Hiro Murakami, climate scientist and hurricane expert at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

So far this year, though, only one Atlantic hurricane, Florence, has reached major status.

Warm water acts as fuel for hurricanes. Water has to be at least 79 degrees (26 degrees Celsius) for a storm to form. The warmer the wa-



This Thursday, Sept. 7, 2017 satellite image made available by NOAA shows the eye of Hurricane Irma, left, just north of the island of Hispaniola, with Hurricane Jose, right, in the Atlantic Ocean.

Associated Press

ter, the more it can resist forces that would cause it to weaken, said University of Miami hurricane researcher Brian McNoldy, who wasn't part of the study.

Murakami found that a combination of natural conditions and man-made climate change made the waters warmer in one key area, which caused more major storms. That area is essentially a large box from south of Florida and north of South America, stretching all the way east to Africa.

Some of the strongest Atlantic hurricanes form off the coast of West Africa, then chug west toward the Caribbean and the U.S. East Coast.

Water in that large box — the main hurricane development region — aver-

aged 0.7 degrees (0.4 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal for the entire 2017 season, which is unusual for a six-month time period, Murakami said.

Murakami's study used computer simulations to isolate different climate conditions. Although his research showed both natural and human-triggered causes from the burning of coal, oil and gas, Murakami said he couldn't separate them enough to see which was bigger.

He used the computer models to look into the future. The Atlantic is projected to warm faster than the rest of the world's oceans. That difference is why Murakami said the number of major storms will probably increase by two or more on average. □

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APNewsBreak: 80,000 people died of flu last winter in U.S.

By MIKE STOBBE

NEW YORK (AP) — An estimated 80,000 Americans died of flu and its complications last winter — the disease's highest death toll in at least four decades.

The director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Robert Redfield, revealed the total in an interview Tuesday night with The Associated Press.

Flu experts knew it was a very bad season, but at least one found the size of the estimate surprising.

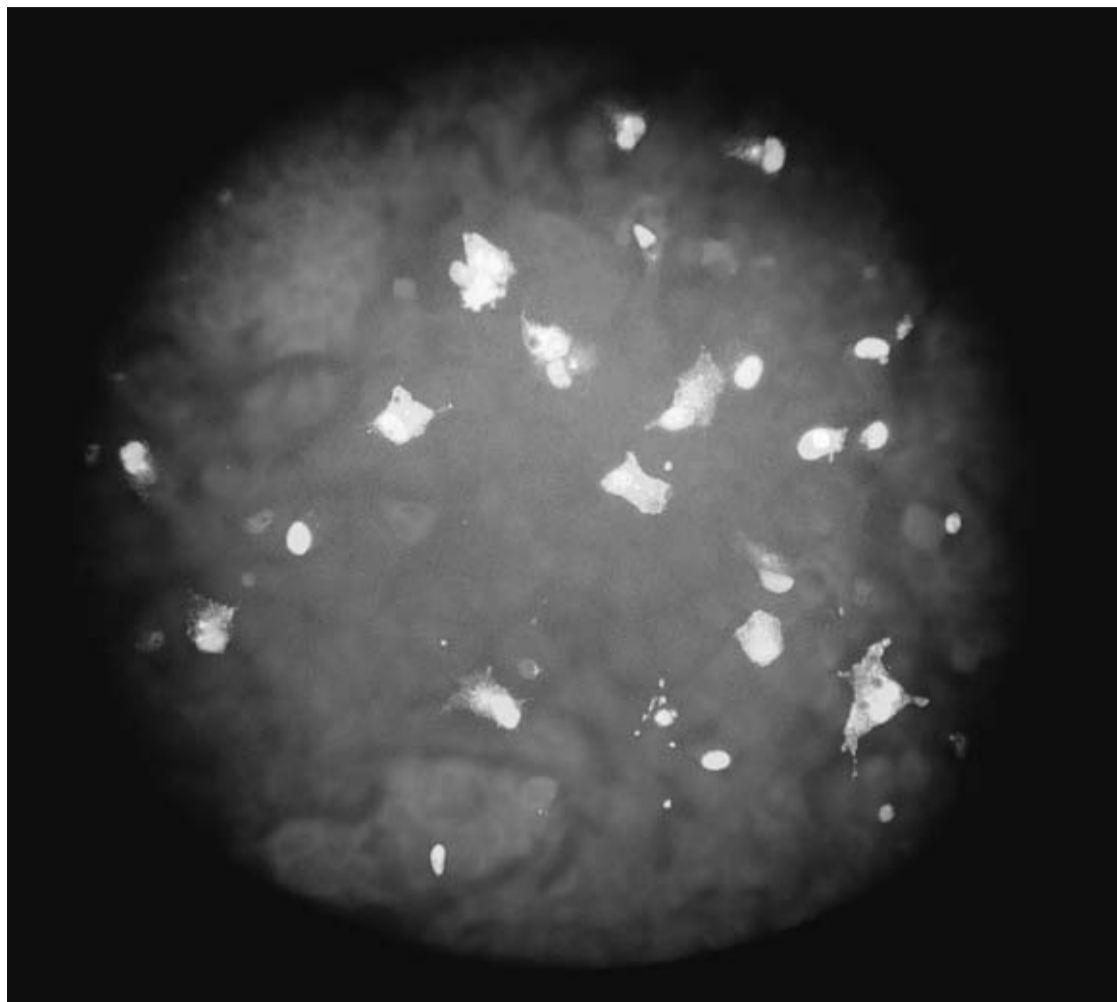
"That's huge," said Dr. William Schaffner, a Vanderbilt University vaccine expert. The tally was nearly twice as much as what health officials previously considered a bad year, he said.

In recent years, flu-related deaths have ranged from about 12,000 to 56,000, according to the CDC.

Last fall and winter, the U.S. went through one of the most severe flu seasons in recent memory. It was driven by a kind of flu that tends to put more people in the hospital and cause more deaths, particularly among young children and the elderly.

The season peaked in early February and it was mostly over by the end of March. Making a bad year worse, the flu vaccine didn't work very well. Experts nevertheless say vaccination is still worth it because it makes illnesses less severe and save lives.

"I'd like to see more people get vaccinated," Redfield told the AP at an event in New York. "We lost 80,000 people last year to the flu." CDC officials do not have exact counts of how many people die from flu each year. Flu is so common that not all flu cases are reported, and flu is not always



In this Feb. 26, 2015 photo taken through the eyepiece of a microscope, human cells infected with the flu virus glow green under light from a fluorescence microscope at a laboratory in Seattle. Associated Press

listed on death certificates. So the CDC uses statistical models, which are periodically revised, to make estimates.

Fatal complications from the flu can include pneumonia, stroke and heart attack.

CDC officials called the 80,000 figure preliminary, and it may be slightly revised. But they said it is not expected to go down.

It eclipses the estimates for every flu season going back to the winter of 1976-1977. Estimates for many earlier seasons were not readily available.

Last winter was not the worst flu season on record, however. The 1918 flu pandemic, which lasted nearly two years, killed more than 500,000 Americans, histori-

ans estimate.

It's not easy to compare flu seasons through history, partly because the nation's population is changing. There are more Americans — and more elderly Americans — today than in decades past, noted Dr. Daniel Jernigan, a CDC flu expert. U.S. health officials on Thursday are scheduled to hold a media event in Washington, D.C., to stress the importance of vaccinations to protect against whatever flu circulates this coming winter.

And how bad is it going to be? So far, the flu that's been detected is a milder strain, and early signs are that the vaccine is shaping up to be a good match, Jernigan said.

The makeup of the vaccine has been changed this year to try to better protect against expected strains.

"We don't know what's going to happen, but we're seeing more encouraging signs than we were early last year," Jernigan said. □

Space station receives special delivery from White Stork



In this image from video made available by NASA, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kounotori H-II Transfer Vehicle approaches the International Space Station on Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018. It's the seventh Japanese shipment to the station and the first in two years.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.
(AP) — Space station astro-

nauts have received a special delivery from a Japanese capsule named White Stork.

The cargo ship known as Kounotori in Japanese arrived at the International Space Station on Thursday, five days after liftoff. It's the seventh Japanese shipment and the first in two years.

Commander Andrew Feustel (FOY-stull) used a robot arm to capture the White Stork.

It holds more than 5 tons of supplies, including new batteries for the station's solar power grid. Spacewalking astronauts will help install the batteries in October, later than planned due to launch delays caused by bad weather and rocket issues.

Feustel and fellow NASA astronaut Ricky Arnold return to Earth next week, along with Russian Oleg Artemyev. That will leave an American, Russian and German on board until another crew launches. □

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Margiela touts genderless fashion in Paris with new campaign

By THOMAS ADAMSON

PARIS (AP) — Maison Margiela went co-ed in Wednesday's installment of Paris Fashion Week, as designer John Galliano bravely championed gender difference in a powerful new runway show.

It's an important issue everywhere, but particularly in the image-driven global fashion industry which has intentionally blurred the definition of and boundaries between men's and women's clothes in recent years to produce genderless designs.

Courreges' new designer unveiled her debut collection, and Dries Van Noten delivered a visual ode to flowers.

Here are some highlights of the spring-summer 2019 shows:

MARGIELA SHOW GOES CO-ED

It was a bold statement against what Margiela called "binary stigmatization" of women's and men's styles.

It made for a creative catwalk show trumpeting genderless fashion and featured unisex wardrobe staples, such as "the overcoat, the caban, the cape."

They were snipped away to



Models wear creations for the Courreges Spring/Summer 2019 ready to wear fashion collection presented in Paris, Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018.

Associated Press

deconstruction by designer Galliano's talented scissors. A bow on a party dress in salmon floral satin jacquard stylishly hung off a gray menswear jacket.

A sparkling gold cape dress, modelled on a shaggy haired man, had incisions and a weight that evoked a men's coat.

While the gender-bending was the dominant theme, other plainly-fun references were sneaked in — such as

a lace dress bonded with sheer georgette to evoke swimwear.

It was what the tongue-in-cheek house dubbed "appropriating the inappropriate."

GALLIANO LAUNCHES GENDER AWARENESS-THEMES

In the guise of Margiela's new "Mutiny" perfume launch, guests at the Wednesday morning show were educated with a powerful short film about

gender.

Margiela is one of the first houses to confront and explore the thinking behind this industry-wide approach, which has crept into many of Paris' major catwalk shows almost unexplained, including Kenzo, Givenchy, Saint Laurent and Vivienne Westwood. Some attribute the decision to merge male and female designs to financial pressures (given it's less costly

to show both in one go), yet others see it more socially, given that the West is increasingly in awareness of the fluidity of gender.

In the Margiela film, narratives by six women echoed around the Grand Palais show venue, including by model Hanne Gaby Odiele who publicly came out as an intersex woman last year.

In the film, Odiele explains her struggle with "characteristics that don't really (fit) the definition of female or male" ... "a lot of people live with it alone and in secrecy, and feel very ashamed."

"The first thing you hear when you're born — 'It's a girl' or 'It's a boy' ... this is my mutiny," Odiele continued. Odiele modeled in the show, walking proudly down the runway in a double-breasted satin suit to cheers and applause.

COURREGES DEBUT

It was the debut collection for Yolanda Zobel, a media-shy French-German designer whose appointment at Courreges was announced in February.

Though Zobel previously worked "behind the scenes" at Jil Sander and Acne Studios — little is known of her previous work. □

Review: Loretta Lynn's vocals and feisty spirit still strong

By KRISTIN M. HALL

Associated Press

Loretta Lynn, "Wouldn't It Be Great" (Sony Legacy)

Loretta Lynn, now 86, hasn't been touring since she suffered a stroke in 2017, but the Kentucky singer-songwriter's creative output remains strong on her new album, "Wouldn't It Be Great." For years, Lynn has been recording her extensive catalog of songs with producing help from John Carter Cash and her daughter, Patsy Lynn Russell, ensuring that her legacy as one of America's greatest songwriters and singers will continue for the next generation even as she's had to slow down her public appearances. Recorded before her stroke, the album was delayed a year as she



This cover image released by Legacy Recordings shows "Wouldn't It Be Great," a release by Loretta Lynn.

Associated Press

focused on her physical health.

The collection of Lynn-penned songs stays true to the country music icon's favored subject matters, from love, heartaches, drunk husbands and angry women, but also family and spirituality.

Half new songs and half previously recorded, her high Appalachian vocals are unmistakably clear and refreshing with simple bluegrass and acoustic instrumentation that highlights the lyric and storytelling behind her nearly 60-year career.

For a woman who has outlived her husband, as well as some of her children, her loneliness and pain is heart-breaking on a song like "I'm Dying for Someone to Live

For."

"Ruby's Stool" sounds like a companion to her classic "Fist City," as Lynn's feisty side comes out in a barroom dispute with another woman. "Wouldn't It Be Great" is a sorrowful plea to her late husband Doolittle to give up drinking for the sake of their relationship and contains little gems of simple and personal writing, such as "love went to waste when my sexy lace couldn't turn your face." On "Ain't No Time to Go," Lynn tenderly sings with just a soft banjo plucking in the background to "stay with me a little bit longer." It feels like a promise to her fans that she's got much more to say if they keep listening. □

In 'Free Solo,' a steeper challenge for Honnold than El Cap

By JAKE COYLE

TORONTO (AP) — The important thing to rock climber Alex Honnold is that the movie screen be big. IMAX, whatever. But big.

It's shortly before the Toronto International Film Festival premiere of "Free Solo," the documentary that chronicles Honnold's legendary, ropeless ascent up Yosemite's El Capitan, a 3,000-foot wall of sheer granite and possibly the world's most fabled rock face. Honnold has just come from free soloing — climbing without safety gear — a 69-story luxury apartment building in Jersey City, New Jersey.

From a hotel window he scans the Toronto skyline but doesn't see anything much appealing. "It has to be inspiring aesthetically," he says.

Honnold, 33, is widely acknowledged as the greatest free-solo climber in the world. And in a sport that demands absolute perfection from its strivers — death is the only alternative — Honnold's feat on El Cap is his masterpiece. An almost unfathomable climb-



In this Sept. 10, 2018 photo, climbers Sanni McCandless, left, and Alex Honnold, subjects of the documentary film "Free Solo," pose for a portrait at the InterContinental Hotel during the Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto.

ing achievement, the four-hour climb is still spoken of in hushed reverence. The New York Times called it "one of the greatest athletic feats of any kind, ever." But whether scaling El Cap was Honnold's greatest

challenge, though, is an open question. Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi's "Free Solo," in theaters Friday, not only chronicles Honnold's famed ascent, and the months of preparation and anguish leading up to it, but also an arguably steeper challenge for the 33-year-old Honnold: moving out of his van and maintaining a long-term relationship.

"Anybody, if you took two years of their life, you would see some growth, hopefully," Honnold says. "But it's easy to see growth when you're starting at zero."

After settling whether "Free Solo" would screen on IMAX (it wouldn't), Honnold was joined by Sanni McCandless, his girlfriend of several years. Just as Chin and Vasarhelyi, the filmmaking couple of the celebrated "Meru," were beginning their film three years ago, McCandless slipped Honnold her number at a book signing. The exceptionally dedicated but goofy and boyish Honnold (in the film, he sums up the fearsome specter of El Cap with the phrase "I mean, dude") is at first almost comically inept at making room for someone else in his life.

"When we started he was online dating, or on-phone

dating, on his book tour. And then he met her. We were not expecting that," says Vasarhelyi.

The two make an appealing and revealing match. McCandless, articulate and assertive, pushes back against the less mature, bluntly honest Honnold, long a bachelor adventurer. Vasarhelyi shakes her head. "It's painful at times," she says, smiling. "Extremely painful."

Case in point: When Honnold, shortly after meeting Sanni, is shown saying that she will come and go like previous girlfriends. Later, they buy a place in Las Vegas and are seen refrigerator shopping.

"How do you feel about that line, Sanni?" Honnold asks.

"How do YOU feel about that line?" she retorts.

"That's just one of many lines in the film I'm slightly horrified to hear back," says Honnold. "That's kind of the nature of two years of filming. They just have so much material of me saying terrible things."

What makes "Free Solo" so fascinating is how these developments influence Honnold just as he preparing to take his biggest risk as a climber. Just the slightest distractions can be po-

tentially lethal for a free soloist, making both the onset of love and the presence of film cameras unpredictable factors in a zero-sum game.

"Soloing always come from some kind of particular mental space. And it has taken some effort to cultivate the right space for a relationship, the right space to still climb at a high level and just try to balance it," says Honnold.

The high stakes also transferred to the film crew. Chin, himself an expert climber, estimates that he and the team of veteran climbers spent more than 30 days rigging and shooting on El Cap. The danger is very real. Many renowned solo climbers have died; just in June, two experienced climbers, Jason Wells and Tim Klein, fell to their death while "simul-climbing" El Cap with ropes.

"You're a pro, but when you have that much exposure and you're moving that much equipment and you're filming on top of it and thinking about your friend, it's a tremendous amount of physical and mental exertion," says Chin. "The crew was tortured by the idea that maybe you'll be filming your friend's death."

Vasarhelyi says the tension was highest when Honnold made his first, aborted soloing attempt of El Cap despite a recent injury. She felt he wasn't prepared.

"But I don't think our role as filmmakers was to tell him not to do it," she says. "And that's weird, right? Especially when there's a life on the line."

McCandless has also had to come to terms with Honnold's obsessive pursuits.

"I don't think I ever wished that he wouldn't do it. I wanted him to not want it, but I never wanted him to not to do it," she says. "Knowing that he does want it, you realize he's going to be so bummed if he never brings it to fruition."

"Free Solo" in some ways demystifies soloing which, to some can sound like lunacy. Honnold's preparation is extreme. □

MEGAPLEX 8 caribbeancinemas.com Caribbean Cinemas Aruba	
SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 3	
	KEVIN HART TIFFANY HADDISH NIGHT SCHOOL [PG-13] MONTHU 4:35 7:00 9:25 FRI 4:35 7:00 9:25 11:50 SAT 2:10 4:35 7:00 9:25 11:50 SUN 2:10 4:35 7:00 9:25
	CHANNING TATUM JAMES CORDEN SMALL FOOT WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [PG] MONTHU 4:30 6:40 8:50 FRI 4:30 6:40 8:50 11:00 SAT 2:20 4:30 6:40 8:50 11:00 SUN 2:20 4:30 6:40 8:50
MOVIES ALL SENSORY FRIENDLY PRESENTATION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 1:00PM DAVE BAUTISTA PIERCE BROSNAN	
	FINAL SCORE [R] MONTHU 4:50 7:10 9:30 FRI 4:50 7:10 9:30 11:50 SAT 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30 11:50 SUN 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30
	JACK BLACK CATE BLANCHETT The HOUSE WITH A CLOCK IN THE WALLS WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [PG] MONTHU & SUN 4:35 6:55 9:15 FRISAT 4:35 6:55 9:15 11:35
	BLAKE LEVELY ANNA KENDRICK A Simple Favor WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [R] MON-FRI 4:50 SAT-SUN 2:20 4:50
BOYD HOLBROOK TREVANTE RHODES PREDATOR WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [R] CXC MON-FRI 4:35 7:15 9:35 SAT-SUN 2:35 4:35 7:15 9:35	DEMIÁN BICHIR TAISSA FARMIGA THE NUN WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [R] MONTHU & SUN 7:20 9:35 FRISAT 7:20 9:35 11:50
Palm Beach Plaza Aruba 586.0074 THE MAGIC OF THE MOVIES ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE	

Beer lovers, listen up: New book has some life hacks for you

By LEANNE ITALIE

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Beer snobs, turn away, Ben Robinson has some hacks involving your favorite, foamy beverage.

The editor in chief of The Observer has written a handy little every guy's illustrated guide of 100 tips, tricks and projects involving beer.

Heading to Munich for Oktoberfest, or perhaps just out to the ball park? He has the best ways to partake. Oops, forgot that bottle opener. Robinson's got you covered. Want to stash some for later? You can do that under the right conditions.

At 37, the Long Islander has been partaking since his college days, but why write an actual book about the stuff? It has remained a passion, he told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

"I went to college in Wisconsin, which is a place that is very devoted to beer in many ways," he said. "In college is really when I had my first very good beer. There was a brew pub called the Angelic that we would go to. Back then, if you went to a bar with your parents (pre-21) and your parents said it was OK, they would serve you beer."

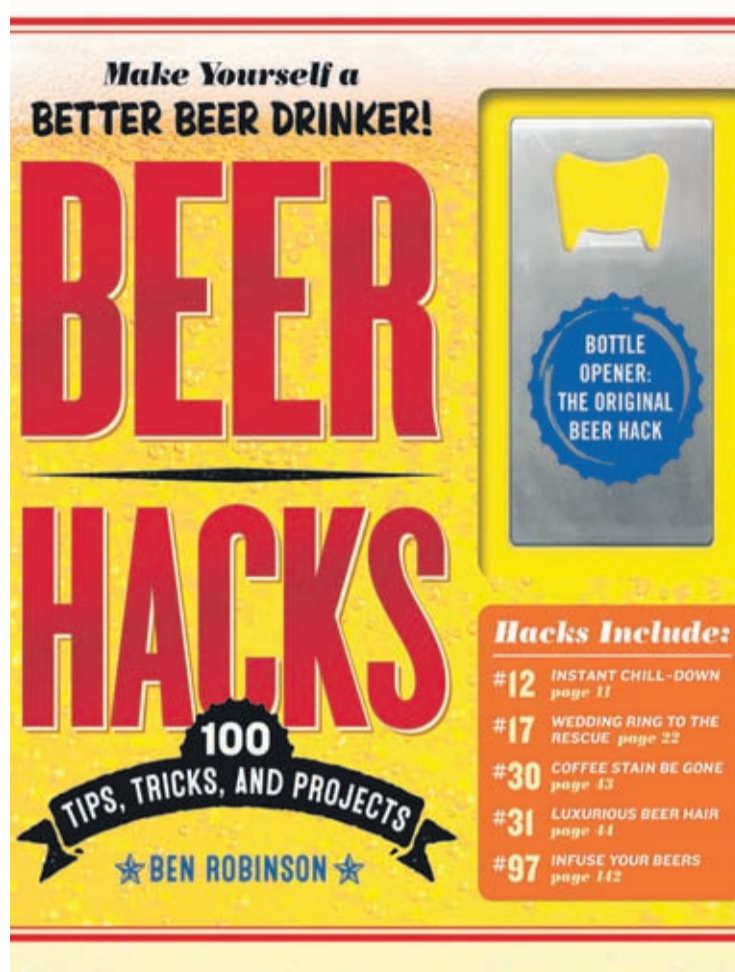
Some highlights from his "Beer Hacks," otherwise known as how to make yourself a better beer drinker:

MAKE THEM COLD QUICK

Warm beer. If it's not your thing, it's your nightmare. When you're really, really thirsty and you come home to a beerless fridge, Robinson has some ideas.

Wet a rag, paper towels or a dish towel, ring out the excess and wrap up your brew for a trip into the freezer. On top of an ice tray or in actual ice is even better. A standard 12-ounce can or bottle should take 10 minutes or less to get to an enjoyable temperature.

That's the path of least resistance. You can grab a receptacle, ice and cups and cups of salt for a cold spin. The ETA is about three minutes of spinning. If you're



This cover image released by Workman shows "Beer Hacks: 100 Tips, Tricks, and Projects," by Ben Robinson.

Associated Press

in a really, really big hurry, like 20 to 30 seconds worth, always have a carbon dioxide fire extinguisher handy. Just put the warm beer in a bucket and fire away in quick blasts of one to two seconds. Quickly rinse.

But remember these words: carbon dioxide fire extinguisher. Not a monoammonium phosphate version. **WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE AN OPENER**

Find a sturdy disposable lighter and use the end that doesn't make fire as a lever. Do some magic by folding a standard piece of computer paper in half, then again and again until it's thick. Six or seven folds should make it stiff enough to do what you did with the lighter.

There's always the open one beer with another beer trick, using the cap. Robinson begs off when it comes to the teeth method.

STORAGE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE FANCY

It's easy to overspend on high-end fridges. Most of the priciest are for wine, anyway. Robinson said resist. Go on Craigslist for a stand-up freezer and pur-

chase a digital temperature control outlet thermostat for \$30 or so. It plugs into any outlet and will regulate the temperature of your new freezer to turn it into a perfect beer fridge instead. Set it to about 45

degrees.

Beer cans and bottles should be stored upright to last as long as possible. The enemies of beer are light, heat and oxygen. Only brown glass and opaque containers such as cans can stop beer from "skunking," meaning when light breaks it down and changes the flavor.

Fluctuations in temperature will skunk beer as well. Consistency is key. When you open it, drink it! Remember that whatever storage place you choose should be kept dark 99 percent of the time. Use your basement, dark garage or the inside of a closet.

Also remember, according to Robinson, that not all styles of beer are cellar-worthy. The exceptionally hoppy are intended to be consumed as fresh as possible. Most beers with ABV (alcohol by volume) below 7.5 percent won't last very nicely long term, he said.

AROUND THE HOUSE

Beer isn't just for getting things dirty. For gold and gold-plated jewelry, drop some into a glass of beer and soak for a bit before polishing.

Robinson said "good" beer actually cleans jewelry worse than the very cheap,

so bonus.

It's the slight acidity, he said, which also works on greasy, grimy pots. Copper pots especially.

In the garden, know that slugs love beer. Bury a plastic cup or a few around plants that slugs have taken to, with the lips of the cups slightly above ground. Fill three-quarters of the way up with light beer. No, you won't get every single slug to slime on over, drink and fall in, plus it's ethically your choice to decide on their beer deaths.

A hack for the weary: Pick up a bag of hops at a local brewing supply shop or order online. You'll need "leaf" hops, not pellets. Rub liberally on your pillowcases for some help falling asleep.

HOW TO ORDER BEER

At a professional sporting event, Robinson urges purchase of the biggest beer they sell. Your cost per ounce generally declines as the size of the cup goes up.

At beer fests, take advantage of those long lines to pace yourself, plus the beer's probably better than those to be had in the shorter lines. Also, realize that Oktoberfest in Munich actually began in September. □

Childish Gambino postpones tour due to injured foot

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Childish Gambino is postponing his tour to recover after he injured his foot.

Live Nation says the performer's "This Is America Tour" will resume on Dec. 2 in Nashville, Tennessee. The tour promoter says tickets for the rescheduled shows will be honored at the new dates.

Gambino, whose real name is Donald Glover, injured his foot during a concert in Dallas on Sunday.

The injury is also forcing Gambino to cancel his appearance at the Austin City Limits Music Festival in October. □



In this Friday, Sept. 21, 2018 file photo, Childish Gambino performs at the 2018 iHeartRadio Music Festival Day 1 held at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Japan preschools using tablets to prep tots for digital age

By YURI KAGEYAMA

Associated Press

YOSHIKAWA, Japan (AP)

— It's drawing time at this suburban nursery school in Japan, but instead of crayons, tiny fingers are tapping on colors on iPad screens and taking selfies. Digital schooling has arrived in this nation long known for its zealous commitment to "three R's" education.

Coby Preschool, in a small town northeast of Tokyo, is among nearly 400 kindergartens and nursery schools in Japan that are using smartphone software applications designed especially for preschoolers called KitS.

That's only about 1 percent of this nation's kindergartens and nursery schools. But it's a start. Coby is helping lead a national initiative in "digital play."

Parents everywhere worry their children might fall behind, and Japan is no exception.

The government has recently made strengthening technology education national policy even as it struggles to meet its goal of supplying one digital device — computer or tablet — for every three children.

DIGITAL PLAY

With KitS, developed by Tokyo-based startup SmartEducation, children color birds and flowers that appear to come alive as three-dimensional computer graphics. Children also draw various creatures that, when captured as computer images, swim or float around in virtual landscapes.

In a recent session, children got a triangle image on their iPads and were asked to draw on it with digital colors, store that image, and draw another one to create a two-screen story.

The usually shy children burst into an uproar, brainstorming happily about what the triangle might represent: a sandwich, a rice ball, a dolphin, a roof, a mountain.

The children were then encouraged to come to the front of the class and explain what they had drawn as the images were shown on a large screen.



In this July 12, 2018, photo, children raise their hands to share views as they take part in a digital program at a Coby Preschool in Yoshikawa, suburban Tokyo, with their teacher and preschool principal Akihito Minabe.

Associated Press

"There is no right or wrong answer," said Akihito Minabe, the preschool principal leading the session.

The point is to nurture creativity, focus and leadership skills.

"They think on their own, they learn it's OK to think freely, and it's fun to come up with ideas," said Minabe.

In the U.S., 98 percent of children age 8 and under have a mobile device in their homes, while 43 percent have their own tablet, according to The Genius of Play, a U.S. program that

researches education and play.

That's similar to Japan, where each adult has an average of more than one smartphone and about half of preschoolers have access to a mobile device, according to Japanese government data.

In many U.S., Asian and European preschools and elementary schools, teachers use technology to present stories, music and other information. Educators are also studying children's social development through how they learn to share

digital devices.

GETTING SMARTER?

Much of what's driving the adoption of tablets in U.S. preschools is a belief, founded or not, that an early start will make kids smarter at technology, said Patricia Cantor, a professor of early childhood education at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire. However, early research into how tablets and apps affect learning for kids ages 2 to 5 is inconclusive.

"Touchscreen stuff is pretty intuitive. They don't need training," Cantor said.



In this July 12, 2018, photo, a child works on a digital program at Coby Preschool in Yoshikawa, suburban Tokyo, on an assignment, which was to draw on a triangle on an iPad.

Associated Press

Some studies show positive outcomes among young children using mobile devices to improve their literacy, science or math skills, but there's little research comparing tablet-assisted learning to more conventional teaching approaches, according to a review of 19 studies by Christothea Herodotou, a lecturer at The Open University in the United Kingdom.

Herodotou said it's unclear which features might help or hinder learning. Devices and apps can also be misused — for instance, to keep children occupied so teachers can do other things.

"Even if it's designed to encourage learning or exploration or curiosity, it may not be used in that way," said Cantor. "There's so much junk out there."

Still, the target age for "digital play" is getting ever younger.

Experts have known for years that playing is how children learn, says Ken Seiter, Executive Vice President at The Toy Association, a nonprofit, which represents businesses that design, produce, license and deliver youth-entertainment products.

Toys can teach toddlers simple programming or use augmented reality to bring story characters digitally alive, said Seiter, whose organization spearheads The Genius of Play, a U.S.-based program that researches education and play.

JAPAN'S TAKE

Japan's classrooms tend to be more structured than in the West, with students often acting in unison as they line up, bow and chant together. Children tend to be passive, and the emphasis is on the group rather than individuals. Youngsters, even some preschoolers, attend extracurricular cram schools.

KitS' designers have sought to make activities fun. One aim appears to be nurturing outspokenness.

Yuhei Yamauchi, a professor of information studies at the University of Tokyo and KitS adviser, sees practical benefits. □